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ABSTRACT

Seven papers from the Mbabane workshop are presented in the first part of this report: (1) "An Overview of the Supply of Information in Swaziland" (E. Wamala); (2) "The Place of a Documentation Centre in the Supply of Information in Swaziland: Problems and Prospects" (M. M. Nhlapo); (3) "The Concept of Cooperation in Information Services: National, Regional, International" (Z. N. Ngcobo); (4) "The User vis-a-vis the Information Purveyor" (E. E. Kaungamno); (5) "The Application of Theory to Practice" (S. B. Monageng); (6) "The Role of a National Information Service in Socio-Economic and Cultural Development" (N. Longwe); and (7) "Improvement of National and Regional Information Services: An Assessment of Problems and Solutions Prescribed under the PADIS Programme" (D. Abate). Recommendations from the IDRC/UNESCO/TLS Conference on Resource Sharing in Southern and Central Africa (Tanzania, December 1985) are appended to this section. Six papers from the Maseru workshop are presented in the second part of the report: (1) "The State of the Art in the Field of Information Supply on a National Scale" (M. M. Lebotsa); (2) "Identification of an Institution Which Could Play the Role of a National Documentation Centre" (R. J. Kukubo); (3) "Role of a National Information Service for the Socio-Economic and Cultural Development" (S. M. Mohai); (4) "The Fitting of National Information Services into Regional and International Information Systems, and the Use of Such Services/Systems" (M. M. Moshoeshe); (5) "Information Retrieval: A Case Study--The Minister's Speech" (J. R. Neill); and (6) "User-Related Problems at NUL [National University of Lesotho] Library" (P. Moabi). Also included for each of the workshops are opening and closing remarks; workshop recommendations; the workshop program; and a listing of participants, resource persons, and staff. (KM)

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REPORT

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
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Co-ordination and Improvement of National Information Services

Mbabane and Maseru Workshop Papers

Mbabane / Swaziland, 24-28 February 1986

Maseru / Lesotho, 3-7 March 1986

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Coordination and Improvement
of National Information Services

Mbabane and Maseru Workshop Papers

Report of two workshops held in Mbabane/Swaziland from 24-27 February, 1986, jointly organized by the German Foundation for International Development, the Swaziland National Library Service and the Swaziland Library Association, and in Maseru/Lesotho from 3-7 March, 1986, jointly organized by the German Foundation for International Development, the National University of Lesotho and the Lesotho Library Association.

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Part A

The Mbabane Workshop

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by Mr. B. Kingsley

OPENING SPEECH

by M.J.Nsibandze, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education.

Thank you Mr.Chairman, the Representative of the German Foundation for International Development, our distinguished visitors, ladies and gentlemen.

I hope our visitors appreciated the first sign of Swazi hospitality, when they arrived at the airport. It is my hope that in fact such hospitality will continue during the one week's stay in Swaziland, I hope this will also be extended to our colleagues when they leave Swaziland.

I feel greatly honoured to address this very important workshop on information. As you know ladies and gentlemen, information is a key factor to decision making and planning in general, if you plan without information you are likely to commit many grievous errors and that will be very costly at international level. Therefore this Workshop could not have not come at a better time than now when we need accurate information and also reliable information so that whatever decisions are made may be meaningful.

Now you remember ladies and gentlemen since 1982, discussions have been held by SADCC countries with a view of establishing Documentation and Information system. These efforts culminated in a feasibility study being undertaken and a report being written with the aim of having the Southern African Documentation and Information Network adopted as a SADCC project. For various reasons this project has not yet been taken into effect.

You will be aware that without such an information network, SADCC countries are placed in a big disadvantage. It is very important for development be it economic or otherwise to have an exchange of information. Human nature is a difficult one in that we do not want to learn from errors of others, but when we have information available at hand we have no excuse to repeat the errors which have been done by other countries. This is why the

Information Network of Southern Africa is very important. I hope, therefore, that this important workshop helps to expedite the establishment of such a network within Southern Africa because I know in Education and I know in Agriculture we need to know what is happening in other SADCC countries in order to have our plans carried out more effectively. I have been told that one of the reasons that the Southern African Documentation and Information System project has not been formally set up or set in motion was the feeling among the member states that there should be a strong internal documentation and information system before embarking on a regional network. This could be true because we are all aware that as in the Bible it is said that in order to be successful you must start from Jerusalem and then move to the other regions. This is why therefore it becomes important that a national network system should be established which will help to facilitate the establishment of this regional network system.

I am hoping that this seminar will help us to establish in Swaziland this information system so that we will be ready to participate in a subregional one. With this in mind the German Foundation for International Development was requested to sponsor this Workshop which, it is hoped, will develop a coordinated strategy for documentation and information within our kingdom.

The feeling of the necessity for national development in the information world also came out in a regional conference that was held in Tanzania in December which the Swaziland National Library Service Director attended and the recommendations of which he has passed on to me. I understand you also have them in your workshop papers and it is my hope that such plans will be considered and action may be taken upon them.

I remember in particular the late Prince Makhosini, who, in one of the meetings which I attended as a junior officer in the Ministry, said that one of the most difficult things that you can do in the Ministry is to operate with half truths and half information. The result is that with such limited information your actions and your strategies tend to

be parted when you have to differentiate between the half truths and the actual reality of the situation. In one of his famous quotes he said, "without information there can be no government function". With information, government can operate successfully and more effectively. And in this connection I would also like to quote the Honourable Minister of Education in the Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Makwetta in his opening speech last December. He said, "information is power and a man who knows is twice the man".

I feel greatly honoured to address this important workshop on information which is a key factor in decision making and planning. If you don't prepare your information then you are in problems because if such information is not well documented and prepared in sequence you are likely to confuse the people you are addressing. I wish to quote Mr. Mohamed Madkour of the Industrial Development Centre for Arab States, who gave a talk during a similar workshop that was held in 1979 who said, "undoubtedly decision makers, researchers, practitioners, in the so called developed world, by having an easy access to the network of organised information, are performing at a much higher intelligence level than they were originally gifted. Those who will not join the information revolution will not enjoy the intelligence explosion that it introduces". So it is very important that with information you are able to participate in a fast changing world. Without information you remain a Third World country, or may be under developed, merely because you don't have enough information.

You, ladies and gentlemen that are associated with information, documentation and distribution in Swaziland play a very important part because from what you say you can mislead the nation, from what you say you can even affect some of the plans that the nation intends to develop. It is therefore important that you as a group realise you have a big responsibility to keep us informed to help us make decisions that will help Swaziland develop to be one of the best countries in the world. These two speakers I

mentioned above have emphasized that if a man is well informed he is twice the man because he can rely on himself and rely on the correct information that he gets.

Too much precious money has been wasted on undertaking studies and research when the information is already available somewhere and the research has already been undertaken at some previous time by different countries. As I have already stated, it is your job at this workshop to develop a strategy towards a national information system that will ensure that information reaches the people who should be using it for effective and better development of the country. It is therefore important that you should take this workshop as a very crucial one in your own personal development.

In a country of the size of Swaziland there is no need for duplication of information services. Again, this will lead to a wasting of valuable resources. Libraries and other documentation and information centres must cooperate their efforts towards a national goal. It is important that wherever you operate, be it at the University, be it in the National Library, be it in a school library you should have common aims and the information that you have gathered should be easily shared. I was talking to one of the journalists one day we were accompanying the Minister, and I asked this journalist why his paper produced misleading information, when in fact the other paper has 'correct information. Then this man said there is need for competition. The papers are sold, is what he told me, if your paper appears to have more information than the other one. But discussing the issue we came to a conclusion that of course by giving information you give the substantial truth in that information in the newspaper, but then there are other ways of putting flavour in terms of headlines that you submit. You don't give your editor the headlines, you give him the substance of the subject, so that he can also put it in his own way. I hope the information system does not want to be associated with contradictory statements, but like newspapers, you are supposed to provide information that is truthful, reliable, and that can be used for various purposes.

Also present at this workshop, I am aware, there are potential users of all types of information. Please allow me to address you specifically for a moment. You must be prepared to educate yourselves and your peers to make use of information in your work. Similarly you should not be guilty of building up your own private libraries in your offices. Somebody else may send overseas for information that is lying in the next office in your beautiful display cabinet. You must also make the information profession aware of your needs. Communication and cooperation are again the operative words. An interesting example is in our own Ministry. Somehow we had a wordprocessor but because information was not available we were forced to go and hire a private firm to do wordprocessing for a report we were about to publish. After we had published it and when the bill came out the people who had a wordprocessor lying in their office said, "but we have one". When I looked back I realised that without the proper information within a Ministry, a mistake like this can cost you a few thousand Emalangeni, but if it is done at national level it's even worse because the amount of money that will be wasted by not passing on information will be even greater.

Now my profession is in Education, in fact I am a teacher. I liked being a teacher maybe more than being a Principal Secretary, because working as a teacher you get results, whereas working as a Principal Secretary you don't get results, you only push papers and the result is that you will no longer enjoy that professional satisfaction of knowing that you have helped somebody know a concept and understand it. So as an educator I also see a need here that as information specialists you must work tirelessly during this workshop in order to direct your thoughts towards the future. If tomorrow's leaders, scientists, planners and decision makers are to be a part of the information revolution and the intelligence explosion, the groundwork in educating them to seek out new information must be laid today. I urge you therefore to assist us in the Ministry of Education by giving us your ideas on the development of school libraries. The development of school libraries is very vital. We have heard people saying they are going to make research on this point, or the other point. Sometimes they don't because they don't know

where to find the information. But if this foundation is laid at school libraries then it means the younger people will grow up with an idea of finding out information before they can make a decision, of finding out information before they can tackle a problem. As I said, some of these problems that each of our countries are facing have in fact been experienced by other countries and it is, therefore, important to make a decision based on the information and the experiences of other people, even in different countries.

You will agree with me, ladies and gentlemen, that it is true that the most important function of education is to pass on general information from one generation to the other. In the same way for a developing country such information should be collected from countries which have similar problems, so that we could be guided in developing the future to ensure happiness of everybody.

Finally I wish to especially congratulate your organising Committee, Mr.Chairman, and also to thank the sponsors, the German Foundation for International Development, for managing to attract this cross section of resource persons and participants from our sister states in the SADCC region. This is primarily a national workshop but will also study regional issues. You who are visitors come not only to share your experiences or expertise but also to learn something from your Swaziland colleagues. You are very welcome and, although the organisers have left you little time to yourselves, we hope you will have some time and not be exhausted to see something of the country and to meet our people.

I also wish to thank the Chairman and his colleagues for having invited me especially to meet the sponsors and to look at the realities of this Workshop. I wish you well in your deliberations and once again I urge you to open your ideas and experiences, and come out with practical recommendations that will not end on paper as so many others have done, but ones that will be put into

practice. DSE deserve to be highly thanked because, for instance, this morning we learnt that there is a possibility of associating further with the Foundation for training in the future.

By coming together as a group it is my hope that you will be in a position to learn from one another so that when you go back to your stations you will be more effective in the work that you are doing.

It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to declare this workshop on "The Coordination and Improvement of National Information Services" officially opened.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SUPPLY OF INFORMATION IN SWAZILAND

by E. Wamala

According to the theme of this workshop, which is "Improvement of National Information Services" and the aim of the workshop, which is to bring into focus the availability of Information Services to decision-makers in the region, but with particular reference to the Kingdom of Swaziland, I can see a need to explain, in general terms, what I understand by the term "Information" and the terms "decision-makers", before I can confine myself to the topic I was asked to write about "An overview of the supply of information in Swaziland".

There are various definitions of "Information", one of which is by Michael Aldrich, who calls information "communication of instructive knowledge" and then who goes on to say that "knowledge is the key resource in our society. Its creation, storage, distribution and utilization are vital for our national prosperity and our quality of life". Information has "Generators", who are the authors and publishers; information has "Transmitters/Disseminators", who are the information officers and information has "Consumers/Recipients, who are the users.

Information can be found in various forms; in the literary works like books and periodicals, in data banks, stored on magnetic tapes, discs, drums, on cassettes videos, microfilms and microfiche, in newspapers and magazines and in oral tradition, that is, passed on by word of mouth.

Information can have a bias and ambiguities, depending on aims of the generators. Christopher Price, in his article "Information:-Commodity or social need?" said that "most folk in the information business have some sort of axe to grind. Government information officers bias information to put their departments and the policy of their ministers in the best possible light; company information officers do much the same. Newspaper owners

pick editors who can be relied upon to deliver their prejudices daily to the nation, ... " so, clearly information should be handled with precaution.

We here, as information professionals can be very important people since we do not have any vested interest in either suppression or distortion of information. By the terms "decision-makers", I think of Top Civil Servants/Administrators, Parliamentarians, Heads of Para-Statal Bodies, Academicians, Business men and Consultants in various fields, all who are required to make decisions in their various spheres.

Let us now have a quick survey of the supply of information in Swaziland. I purposely call it a quick survey because given the time I was given to prepare this paper, I could not possibly make a detailed survey of information supply in the whole of Swaziland. I could not, for example, send out a questionnaire, which is normally essential in an exercise like this. The best I could do was to sample out a few ministries and institutions, which I visited and extracted whatever information I could, to enable me to write this paper.

Swaziland is a small country, with a total area of 17,363 sq. kilometres, with a maximum length of 192 kilometres from North-South and 144 kilometres, East-West. Population is well over half million by the last census. It is possible that the census currently in progress, will come out with a figure of a million or above.

In trying to identify the information services available to decision-makers in Swaziland, we have to ask ourselves a number of questions like; what types of services exist, where located, are they accessible, how effectively used and if not effectively used, why? What problems and limitations exist to hinder effective use? Some of these problems could be ignorance of the existence of the services due to bad management, or shortcomings within the services. Take for example, an information institution could have vast treasures which are not known because of improper processing, incomplete records and lack of finding aids.

Looking at the types of information services presently existing in the country, let us start with Libraries and Archives, since charity begins at home.

The biggest library service is the Swaziland National Library Service, which has its headquarters in Mbabane, where a large number of decision-makers are found. It has a modern, purpose-built building, up-to-date equipment and is well stocked. It is readily accessible and its membership is open to all. It has a wide range of materials, from reference, adult fiction and nonfiction, children's fiction and nonfiction, Swaziana, United Nations and its agencies' publications. As for the facilities available, there are reference and circulation, reproduction, Inter-Library loans and postal services. There is a Prison's Service located at Malkerns and there is a special service to schools around Mbabane known as the School Study Centre. Also there is a Mobile Library serving outlying areas.

There are other service points, the biggest of which is Manzini Library (originally the headquarters of the library service) and is now located in the 2nd largest town in Swaziland, which is also the Commercial town with its adjoining Matsapa Industrial Site. This service is not confined to its building only but spreads out its tentacles to rural areas through branch libraries. There are branch libraries in centres like Piggs Peak, Big Bend, Nhlanguano, Hlatikulu, Siteki and Lavumisa. When the proposed branches open at Tshaneni, Simunye and Bhunya, then there will be a good coverage of information throughout the country.

As for the future development, the Swaziland National Library Services is trying to inculcate the reading habit into the young generation so that reading and the use of libraries become a natural habit for life. Also it aims at furthering "development of technical libraries within Government and various institutions throughout the country which are of benefit to both Civil Servants, University Students and Staff, and other seekers of information for research and planning".

Somehow related to the Swaziland National Library Service, we have the Swaziland National Archives and Records Centre, located at Lobamba, the traditional capital, housed in a modern, purpose-built building and possessing some very valuable information on Swaziland in the form of files and records as well as government publications. Needless to say, the Archives has a lot to offer in the way of information on the country's past and present and is heavily used by serious researchers both from within the country and the outside world at large.

Also at Lobamba is the Parliament Library, housed in Parliament building, to cater for Parliamentarians and the National Trust Commission collection/library. We must not forget the National museum, found on the same premises as the National Trust Commission. It is common knowledge museums hold very valuable information on a country in the form of artifacts, relics of the past, pictures, photographs, maps, crafts and so on.

We now come to the Academic Libraries which include the University Library Service, College Libraries and other Institutions of learning libraries.

The University Library Service is spread on two campuses of Kwaluseni and Luyengo, as well as on three research stations, namely, Malkerns Agricultural Research, Big Bend Agricultural Research and Nhlanguano Experimental Farm Research. Obviously these academic libraries offer more specialised information of academic nature, with a coverage in depth on a variety of subjects. Although their main clientele is the University community, their gates are open to members of the public who require their services.

Here mention should be made of the Social Science Research Unit Documentation Centre, located at Kwaluseni Campus, which is a very valuable source of information on Swaziland, found in its numerous research articles and newspaper clippings on Swaziland.

There are a number of Institutions and Colleges, which have reasonable library facilities , e.g., William Pitcher Teacher Training College, Ngwane Teacher Training College, SIMPA and SCOT, to mention just a few.

Let us turn to "Special" libraries. We will start with the Economic Planning and Statistics Library, which is a very important source of information to top Civil Servants, Administrators, Planners and policy makers. The main task of library is to distribute government publications to users. It has a very comprehensive distribution list, headed by Her Majesty, The Queen Regent, followed by the Office of the Ligoqo, the Prime Ministers Office, All Ministers, Principal Secretaries, Para-Statal Bodies, banks, the University and Council of Churches. Looking at this distribution list in detail one gets a clear picture of the very wide coverage of information supply. The same library is consulted by business men, mass media personnel and Teachers.

As a result of this mailed information from the Economic Planning and Statistics library, individuals who recieve the documents build up what I would call "small office collections", which are a prominent feature in people's offices and which are a vital source of information to them.

When I asked some officers in a certain Ministry why they did not bring together all their personal collections into one place to form a well organised library, the officers replied that they were reluctant to part with their materials for fear of them getting lost; also that they lacked the manpower to establish a library although all efforts were being made to establish a documentation centre in their Ministry.

Another method officers used to get information to assist them in decision-making and planning was by means of sending out questionnaires and forms to the relevant officers in the field, who had information available. Take ,for example, planners in the Ministry of Education, who use this method of getting information on the physical facilities of schools, school fees,

teachers and their qualifications, pupils and their performances - all which help them to make decisions for those schools. No decision can be made in a vacuum. Decision making depends, we all know, on answers to vital questions like, "Is this project possible?" (If there is new project envisaged) "Is it going to be relevant to the needs of the country or the given area? Will it be adequately financed?" and so on....

What sort of information is supplied by mass media? Obviously here we are looking at radio, television and newspapers. Information supplied by mass media is very important because of its being most up-to-date. These institutions have devices which enable them to collect the latest news continuously, i.e. working 24 hours, which they present to the public.

I would like to talk about the Government Information Section, which is part of the Swaziland Broadcasting Service. This section has been trying its best to collect and supply information to government and to the general public but somehow those who head this service feel it does not fulfil the role it is supposed to play. Plans are underway to improve on it. It is thought as necessary that the Government should have a strong, central, public information department to serve as government spokesman. At the moment, various media that exist have no real authority to refer to, as regards the authenticity of the information disseminated daily in respect of government policy and activities; nor does Swaziland Broadcasting Service Information Section has a clear policy in terms of its responsibilities.

Of the newspapers, I would like to look at The Times of Swaziland, which is privately owned but which is very effective in supplying information to the general public. This paper collects information/news through a number of full time journalists, who go round collecting information, through free lance reporters who come up with their articles and through subscribing to Reuters for world news. The paper tries hard, I

was told, to report accurately. Considering that this paper is very widely read, it must be a valuable source of information to decision makers, planners, businessmen and to all the people.

We have many other nongovernment information supply centres. I would like to take one example to these and have a look at the American Cultural Centre. This centre has a library, which is well stocked with books, periodicals, newspapers and magazines on America. Information offered here is intended to promote United States of America foreign policy. Usually, publications from this centre are donated to the University, colleges, and schools.

This centre also has video programs, which show films of current news e.g. the "ABC World News". These films come directly from America and are shown regularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Any member of the public is free to attend, free of charge.

There are also programs of selected topics, centred on the different American States. From time to time such programs are of such importance to decision-makers, that the Public Affairs Officer invites Ministers, Principal Secretaries and top civil servants to his house to see them.

There is, at the same centre, what is known as "Outreach Program", which is very effective in disseminating information. In this program, selected information is sent to the relevant users; for example, periodical articles, tables of contents, magazines and periodicals are sent to people who might need them. The method used is called "Distribution Records System" (DRS) whereby various officers are assigned to disseminate information to a category of people e.g. the Librarian there handles Librarians, the Public Affairs Officer deals with civil servants etc.

Also of vital importance is their Lending Service. Any interested person from the age of 18 can be a member of the Library, entitled to borrow 2 books or 2 back issue of a magazine for a period of two weeks. I feel that the American Cultural

Centre is one of the institutions which should be praised for their effort in supplying information in a variety of ways to users.

Having mentioned all the various suppliers of information, we should not forget the publishers like Swaziland Printing and Publishing, MacMillan Boleswa Publishers and Webster Print Commercial Printers and others, who organise information into printed forms for permanent preservation.

In conclusion, I would like to say that on the whole, information supply in Swaziland is quite reasonable, considering the size of our country and population. Notwithstanding, a lot could be done to improve upon or to expand the existing services.

1. First and foremost we need many more trained manpower to handle information. Without adequately trained Librarians, Archivists, Information Officers, and Documentalists, a lot of information lies wasted and unutilized. Needless to say, information professionals play a vital role in availing information to the various clients to make decisions and to plan for the country. These people base their plans and decisions on prior information available. No one can plan a school or a hospital for a given area before knowing the basic facts of size of population, etc. of that area.

2. After getting more information professionals there will definitely be better organization of information and finding aids. Availability of information does not necessarily mean retrieval of information. While information can be available, improper organization and lack of finding aids will make it impossible for would-be users to find it.

3. A National Information policy in Swaziland is necessary, which will embody copyright, conservation etc. and which will lead to the formation of National Information Infrastructures to facilitate maximum exploitation and sharing of resources.

4. Legislation is an urgent necessity. There should be up-to-date Libraries and Archives Acts in which Legal Deposit provisions should be clearly spelled out. Such provisions should be widely publicised so that authors, publishers and other information generators are aware of their responsibilities.

5. Funds:- It is high time it was realised that information services play a major role in national development and that they need their own funds and therefore their budgets should be separate and independent of their parent organizations.

6. Physical facilities need a lot of improvement. Proper buildings, purpose-built with modern equipment and adequate storage facilities are essential. It is high time we moved away from the idea of turning old office rooms into libraries or documentation centres.

7. More publicity is necessary to draw prospective clients to available information. Very often ignorance has hampered effective use of information. Television and radio programmes could be of some use in this respect.

8. Education to members of the public of all categories, on the usefulness of information services, is very essential.

9. Library Cooperation through Inter-Library Loans should be strengthened. Even more professional consultations should be encouraged. May be SWALA can play a more active role of bringing information professional together more often than just at Annual General Meetings.

10. Finally, the possibility of automation in these various information services should be looked into as a means of speeding up communication and increasing efficiency.

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THE PLACE OF A DOCUMENTATION CENTRE IN THE SUPPLY OF INFORMATION
IN SWAZILAND: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS.

by M.M. Nhlapo

1. INTRODUCTION

The realisation of the need to streamline and improve existing information services is in itself a reaffirmation of the vital role information plays in national development. A planning and decision making process stands a better chance of success if it is based on reliable up to date information. This information may exist in abundance within the country but if it is not brought together and organised for the benefit of those who require it, it is a wasted development resource.

2. WHAT IS A NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE?

It would be instructive to begin with a definition of what documentation is all about, and then go on to define a national documentation centre.

'Documentation' involves the process of collecting, accumulating, classifying and making ready and accessible information or records of all kinds of intellectual activity. A 'documentation centre', therefore, brings together, processes and organises relevant information in such a way that it is accessible to all those who require it. Often documentation centres are subject - or discipline-oriented. A 'National Documentation Centre' (NDC) has responsibilities which go beyond those of a documentation centre in that its attention is focused upon the overall needs of the country. It is supposed to act as a mother-body to, and as a co-ordinator of, documentation centres in the country, while serving as a link between the country's information centres and those within the region and beyond. It is, therefore, an organised national information system which deals with information generated

inside and outside the country; information which is vital to decision and policy makers in government ministries or departments, parastatal bodies and the private sector and researchers in humanities, social sciences and pure sciences.

In other words it is a national information agency for all those people who are involved in the social, cultural and economic development of the country.

Sometimes there are problems when the need to tell the difference between documentation centres and libraries arises. The late Bradshaw Mushonga, referring to his country (Zimbabwe) once said that "the distinction between libraries and documentation centres is nonexistent.... functions of documentation centres are covered by libraries"¹. This has an element of truth with regard to Swaziland's situation. At present the only documentation centre (The Social Science Research Unit (SSRU) Documentation Centre at the University) also performs the functions of a library whilst there are libraries which carry out processes normally expected of documentation centres or even national documentation centres. One might say, the difference lies in emphasis and expediency.

3. THE ROLE OF A NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The establishment of an NDC as part of the overall nation information system is based on the assumption that:

"The national ability to cope with development problems largely depends on our ability to produce, acquire, monitor, process and transfer knowledge and information".²

It is for this reason that the improvement of information services in this country cannot be over emphasised. It has to be noted, however, that development suggests the improvement of standards, in particular, people's standard of living. This implies that in any country, particularly

third world countries, where most people are still starving, unemployed, plagued by diseases and illiteracy, development is still lacking. However national development is not a responsibility of one group of the population, say government alone, it requires a concerted effort, understanding, commitment and solidarity between the peoples in the country. It calls for what Willy Brandt poignantly terms "a feeling for realities and a grasp of intertwined interests even if these are not identical".³

The supply of relevant information therefore for the improvement of agriculture, industries, health, education and general survival capabilities is essential.

The existence of NDC would be to facilitate proper and effective use of available information. It would provide an accurate, up to date and comprehensive data bank which could help writers and researchers to avoid duplication of activities whilst at the same time this data bank could be utilised as a basis of development policies, plans and their implementation.

Often there seems to be no link between readers or information users on the one hand and information sources or generators (e.g. writers and publishers) on the other. An NDC offers an institutionalised forum for contact between the two i.e. users and generators of information.

Individuals, institutions and sectors involved in national development require a constant and effective flow of information within the country. An NDC would be there to expedite this vital process.

It is essential that information and knowledge which happen to exist outside the country be made accessible to all those who require it to facilitate development efforts. Conversely there may exist information within the country which could be appreciated in other countries and international agencies. In both situations there is need

for a national focal point through which transfer and exchange of such information can be effected: The NDC would be well placed to perform this task of improving national information capabilities by making it possible for information users within the country to exploit regional as well as international information networks.

The NDC would, therefore, furnish a comprehensive picture with regard to the volume of information production which is relevant to the country's advancement. It would facilitate ready access to this, information about or reference to documents should be subsumed: the NDC should therefore expedite the actual supply and deliver of documents or publications. The supply of relevant information and data to users is ultimately the NDC's primary function and not "the formation of collections for their own sakes".⁴

4. PREREQUISITES FOR A VIABLE NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The feasibility of what the country establishes in terms of a national information system should take into serious consideration the national circumstances and the level of development. This requires that there should be :-

- 4.1. Identification of the information needs of the country in relation to national development priorities. For instance, since agriculture forms the backbone of Swaziland's economy, the establishment and/or improvement of agricultural documentation centres should be regarded as essential.
- 4.2. Surveys into the existence, competence and organisation of information and documentation centres or of information resources in the country.
- 4.3. Assessment of the national manpower resources and needs.

- 4.4. Assessment of technological needs, in particular, those related to communication, which links up the various information centres e.g. roads, telephones, telex and computers.
- 4.5. Formulation of national information policy which aims to cater for national needs which should be recommended to government; and the incorporation of national information and library development into overall national development plans (This would ensure government's commitment to effective information programmes which would lead to the adequate provision of financial and manpower resources).
- 4.6. Establishment of an effective legislative framework.

Whilst it is important to close the gap between the developed and underdeveloped countries, it would be unwise and unrealistic at the same time to blindly go by the standards set by developed countries, since developing countries suffer from acute shortage of resources. For an effective NDC, it is important that unnecessary of services and the consequent wastage of resources should be minimised. Rationalisation of information services within the country thus emerges as a serious priority.

5. INFORMATION SERVICES

A National Documentation Centre in Swaziland is expected to provide a number of services. These include:-

- 5.1. The provision of printed or microform catalogues, in particular, union catalogues.
- 5.2. The provision of bibliographical services i.e. compilation of the national bibliography, conducting computerised literature searches, supply of current awareness lists and retrospective bibliographies.

- 5.3. The maintenance of effective services for the selective dissemination of information.
- 5.4. Serving as a depository of information materials and making these accessible to users.
- 5.5. Collecting information material generated from outside Swaziland which is relevant to the development priorities of the country.
- 5.6. Serving as a focal point of forwarding information requests to appropriate places within and outside the country.
- 5.7. Producing and holding information tools for referral services e.g. Directors for local publishers, information centres, information experts and their areas of specialisation.
- 5.8. Serving as a clearing house, which collects and distributes duplicates of information materials.
- 5.9. Provision of consultancy services aimed at ensuring standard procedures for information and documentation practices e.g. indexing, abstracting and provision of user education and advice on professional training.
- 5.10. Reproducing information into usable formats which cater for the different types and levels of users. This would include translations.
- 5.11. Establishing and/or improving strategies and mechanisms at national level for capturing and collecting documents and publications to facilitate supply in actual hard copies or microform.

- 5.12. Introduction of computer technology and the improvement of telecommunication network and ensuring that services are supported by efficient manpower to maintain necessary but co-ordinated decentralisation.

6. PROBLEMS WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SWAZILAND

The library and information situation in the country has changed very slightly since the last seminar on the "Use of Documentation and Information for Planning and Decision Making" sponsored by The German Foundation (DSE) and held in this country in 1979. Quite a number of problems which were identified then still exist.

Since the country has no NDC, the problems are considered in terms of a national information system.

6.1. USER AWARENESS

It is a fact that a number of people are just beginning to discover that libraries, documentation centres and archives can help them solve their information problems. People are still generally unaware of their right to the information held by these centres. Unfortunately, this might mean that the cost effectiveness of these centres is not being realised.

The predominant attitude towards libraries and information centres is still very traditional i.e. they are still regarded as just storehouses for books and that they only respond to expressed needs. This situation is further aggravated by the fact that the reading and information seeking habits are still not well developed in the country. They are not introduced early in life since the majority of schools do not have school libraries: they start using libraries and documentation centre services at university level.

6.2. USER NEEDS

The information needs of government and the various groups of users in areas such as agriculture, industry, health, education and research, have never been seriously analysed to make sure that planned information services meet these needs. Information services must respond to identified and not assumed needs, therefore, "every national (information) infrastructure must meet the special needs of its own country".⁵

6.3. THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The country's information and documentation centres and their activities are not organised nationally. the functions of the documentation centres, libraries and archives are also not streamlined and coordinated. This has resulted in fragmentation, information service gaps and unnecessary duplication of services. Even distribution of reasonably organised library and information centres seems concentrated in urban areas.

The lack of well-planned organisational structure means that users cannot take full advantage of available information resources and that maximum contribution to the cultural, social and economic development of the nation is not possible.

6.4. MANPOWER

Most information and documentation centres in the country are not supported by sufficient and adequately trained staff. These "have continued to depend a great deal on expatriate professional staff".⁶

6.5 FINANCE

The government and those institutions maintaining information and documentation centres have made attempts to provide financial support; unfortunately this has in most cases tended to be "too meagre, inconsistent and unsystematic with continued dependence on foreign aid".⁷ Yet adequate financial provision is essential to ensure effective information services.

6.6. LEGISLATION

The country has no overall information legislation which would encompass all the components of a national information system and give legal recognition to those elements aimed at the support and facilitation of information supply. The existing legal deposit legislation is not all effective.

7. PROSPECTS FOR THE REALISATION OF A VIABLE NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

B.S. Keran, writing on "The organisation of information services in India", observed that

"the organization and functioning of national documentation and information services can best be appreciated against a background of the total research and technological effort of the country as a whole; the Government's interest and support of such activities; and the industrial or other nation-building activities in the country".⁸

The relevance of this observation to our present circumstances in Swaziland can be seen in what interest the Government has shown in the establishment of a National Documentation Centre. The fact that the Government came forward to sponsor jointly with DSE this workshop is a testimony of its commitment to the idea of a documentation

centre for the country. And, don't we read in the 4th National Development Plan (1986) that the Government through the National Library Service will "assist heads of departments with the establishment of special libraries or documentation centres within their organisations"?⁹

All this points to the fact that prospects for the future are not bleak.

There is ample evidence that with the proper husbanding of the country's resources it should be possible to derive the maximum benefit from all these resources.

I should like, at this juncture, to look at those areas where the prospects are bright.

7.1. EXISTING LIBRARY/INFORMATION FACILITIES

Swaziland is lucky to have within her borders a fully fledged university engaged in study and research. And if the university is to make the proper impact it should stimulate Government's interest in documentation and information service by highlighting their importance for the development of the nation's industrial and economic life. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the University of Swaziland has a library and documentation centre sufficiently well equipped to engage in such services as collection and dissemination of information, not only in the scientific and technological field but also in the humanities and social sciences. The main University Library at Kwaluseni has within it a Special Collection Department which collects both primary and secondary source materials in all fields of study relevant to Swaziland and, on a limited scale, to the Southern Africa sub-region.

The SSRU Documentation Centre complements the work done in the University Library is, as its name implies, concentrates principally on the social sciences.

In addition to these, the Faculty of Agriculture Library in Luyengo engages in documentation work with particular reference to agriculture.

Outside the University too, there is the Swaziland National Library Service which is involved in providing information for the general public. The Economic Planning and Statistics Library has so far been a reasonably better organised special library within government. Then there is also the Mananga Agricultural and Management Centre (MAMC) Library which also specialises in agricultural information; and also the Malkerns Research Station Library, which, if properly organised, could serve as a viable resource centre for the Ministry of Agriculture in the country.

The point of interest here is that there is at least in existence in the country some agencies engaged in documentation work, which, if co-ordinated, could come together and perform the role normally assigned to national documentation centres. What is needed is some kind of control of the resources of all the diverse public and private agencies that create, store, process and distribute records of knowledge so that they are welded into a national programme of planned information service.

7.2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

In spite of the limited financial resources at the disposal of Government, there is evidence that the information sector is not being left out in the sharing out of the national cake. The Government's

development plans and budgets in the past have taken due cognisance of the important role information plays in the overall planning of the country. For it is not the National Library Service that is catered for in the plans/budgets but all other information units in departments, ministries, and institutions of higher learning have a sizeable proportion of their funds allocated to them.

7.3. MANPOWER RESOURCES

Whatever the cry for adequate trained personnel to man the various centres of activities may be, one sees evidence of the country's readiness to send qualified locals for training in information science abroad. The numbers might have increased tremendously if facilities existed at home. Perhaps, it is about time the question of establishing a local training centre was looked into for, it seems to me that it is the surest way of getting the right expertise to man the documentation centres when they come to be established.

7.4. INFORMATION PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

On observing the flurry of activity in the publishing industry one is heartened by the increase of locally produced information materials. Since National book/document production and national documentation are interdependent it is perhaps opportune that local write and researchers should be encouraged to cover the still-existing gaps in information. The enactment of the Legal Deposit law by Government was a welcome step to ensure distribution, collection, and preservation of national imprint by national documentation centres. However, improvement of this legislation seems necessary now.

7.5. THE SWAZILAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (SWALA)

The coming into being of the Swaziland Library Association some months ago must be seen as a landmark in the development of the librarianship and information science in the country. For, as a colleague took pains to point out in the maiden issue of SWALA Journal it behoves the association to "serve as a watchdog to ensure that the highest standards are applied" in the development of libraries and other information centres. Since the association is made up of a large body of professionals it can draw on its expertise to offer professional advice to government and other bodies who may seek this advice. In addition it will concern itself with monitoring library/information service programmes that will be initiated by any agency in the country.

7.6. COMMUNICATION

For the effective realisation of a viable national documentation centre, there must exist a network of communications in the country. Luckily for Swaziland all the major towns are linked by all-weather motorable roads, Cyclone Domoina notwithstanding and considering the fact that distances are not a factor to contend with, it is easy to reach any part of the country within the shortest possible time. It is true, though, in this day and age, one doesn't have to travel any distance at all to collect information. But when we consider the technological development of the country with respect to telegraphic-cum-electronic infrastructure, there is something to be said for such communication links as road transport. Without sounding overly optimistic, one can say that some measure of communication by electronic and other devices can be engaged in.

7.7. CENTRAL CO-ORDINATING BODY

To conclude all the remarks which have been made so far, I recommend that a Central Coordinating Body should be established. Its functions should include:-

- 7.7.1. Co-ordinating information/documentation centres in the country.
- 7.7.2. Soliciting and considering recommendations from the various professional associations connected with information supply.
- 7.7.3. Advising government on the formulation of the national information policy and effective legislation.
- 7.7.4. Serving as a focal point and clearing house for requests, duplicates and exchange.
- 7.7.5. Facilitating links between generators and users.
- 7.7.6. Co-ordinating provision of advice for standardization.
- 7.7.7. Advising on information production and distribution.
- 7.7.8. Monitoring the designated centres and encouraging them to respond to a national policy of creating a unitary informational agency. Such an agency would supply the much needed information for social, cultural and economic development of the country.

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THE CONCEPT OF COOPERATION IN INFORMATION SERVICES NATIONAL, REGIONAL, INTERNATIONAL

by Z. N. Ngcobo

INTRODUCTION

The concept of cooperation, the coming together of persons, organisations, institutions to work together, pooling part or all their resources/efforts together for the purpose of achieving a common goal is no novelty to mankind. The sharing of certain limited facilities in the interest of the common good is a socioeconomic phenomenon noticeable in all human endeavours and evident at all levels of human development. As the old ancient adage goes "United we stand, divided we fall"; the survival of a cooperative activity is, therefore, normally restricted to the achievement of goals that cannot otherwise be accomplished as economically through individual effort.

From the earliest times man sometimes had to engage in some kind of cooperative activity which in part contributed to his survival. Efforts for protection against a common enemy, food gathering, storing and rationing, provision of material for joint construction of shelter directly or indirectly resulted in the varied specialisation and the emergence of formalised communities with countless cooperative ventures which are in existence today in a variety of forms. These ventures have become essential components of organisations which occur in the cultural, economic, educational, social and political facets of society.

Information services, a team embracing such institutions as Libraries, Documentation Centres and Archives, are not an exception to the application of cooperation was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century when the Central Library for Students (LS) was established with financial assistance from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust.¹ The idea was introduced in the United States of America in 1940 when four American institutions established a cooperative interlibrary programme.² A significant later effort was the famous Farmington Plan, the first ever

internationally acknowledged cooperative acquisition scheme, sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries. The idea of cooperative acquisitions was introduced, accepted and implemented in Latin America in the 1960's. The most significant was the "Latin American Cooperative Acquisitions Program" (LACAP).³

Unfortunately in African cooperative ventures of this nature did not take off all that early. Most countries were still under various colonial rule and such schemes could only have been sponsored by the competing metropolitan governments.

The first African countries to gain independence were obviously preoccupied with the meaning and dimensions of their newly-gained sovereignty; such cooperative programmes were, naturally, to be relegated for later-day discussion. In fact information service infrastructures in the form under discussion were non-existent; there were very few, if any, library systems in operation. In Swaziland, for example, the first Public Library was established in 1971,⁴ this was housed in Manzini. Earlier, a Subscription Library had been set up in Mbabane.

OPERATION

Cooperation in Information Services may be described as a programme of action covering the mutual agreement of two or more Information Service organisations pooling part or all their information resources - services or material - without impairing or disrupting internal procedures in order to accommodate the particular needs of the participants. This action of cooperation in Information Services is referred to by such different terms in varying environments as:

Consortia
Inter-Lending
Network
Resource Sharing
Systems

RATIONALE AND IMPETUS:

The rationale and underlying motives which dictate the establishment of cooperative institutions are varied and complex. They could be listed briefly as follows:

- i. FUNCTIONAL: To assist the participating libraries to improve their ability to perform the basic function of matching the needs of users, for information sources, by promoting access to a wider and richer and richer field source.
- ii. ECONOMIC: The unfortunate continual shrinkage of budgets coupled with the inevitable rising costs of information sources make it imperative and prudent to advocate the sharing rather than the duplication of resources.
- iii. INFORMATION EXPLOSION: The rapid increase in information production makes it simply impossible for individual information services to be self-sufficient.
- iv. TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT: Present-day advances in communication technology have made a reality of the dream of integrating multimedia information into communication channels for dissemination as easily as one distributes voice communication.
- v. TECHNO-INFORMATION GAP: A realisation of the wide disparity in the availability of information and information technology between the richer and poorer national Information Centres.
- vi. POLITICAL: The rare and sometimes far-fetched fostering of goodwill among information services of varied sovereign nations.

TYPES OF COOPERATION:

Cooperation schemes in Library and Information Services are naturally varied; and their individual peculiarities are dependent on the particular needs of the participating institutions. These schemes cover a wide range of activities including the location of special material, access to information required, improvement of overall resources, housekeeping processes, staff resources and education, and the management of information services. The schemes are, however, somewhat related, sometimes interdependent and they usually assume the following nature:

- i. COOPERATIVE ACQUISITIONS: This involves the joint purchasing of material whereby participating institutions are assigned special responsibilities to procure items of specific categories either by form, subject-content, geographic region or any other criteria as prescribed and agreed upon by the participating services.
- ii. COOPERATIVE CATALOGUING: This is a housekeeping process involving the sharing of skills of individual cataloguers. Cataloguing of material is carried out by a central cataloguing agency which later distributes copies of catalogue cards to the participating libraries, thereby reducing overhead costs, etc. of the original cataloguing process which otherwise would have been borne by individual libraries.
- iii. COOPERATIVE STORAGE: This project is in response to the shortage of storage space in individual libraries. It is embarked upon to relieve pressure on shelving space. Material is relegated to a storing-house which provides cheap storage for the participating institutions.

- iv. EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL: This is a joint effort to distribute material on an exchange basis. It may involve donation to information centres or serve as a support service in respect of such material as - National Bibliographies, Directories, Union Catalogues, Abstracts and Indexes.
- v. INTER-LIBRARY LOANS:⁵ This is one of the earliest reciprocal schemes organised by libraries. It involves transactions in which library material is made temporarily available by one library to another for use.
- vi. STAFF DEVELOPMENT: This scheme covers the sharing of resource facilities for training information workers. It include the offer of formal training, the organisation of workshops, conferences, and joint research projects.

LEVELS OF COOPERATION:

Cooperation in information services normally beings as an individual inter-institutional activity. However, the change of emphases from material-orientation to user-centred trends has necessitated the inevitable change of approach in cooperation. At the international level such UNESCO programmes as:

National Information Systems (NATIS)

International Cooperation in Scientific and Technical Information (UNISIST)

merged within the General Information Programme (PGI), accept information as a vital resource for development and the channel for the socioeconomic process of change.

Society is in need of information for personal decision-making. At the institutional level, managers and policy-planning scientists need information at all stages in the planning and the execution of programmes. Access to information at the right time

is a prerequisite for functional efficiency in the evolution of an informed society. Consequently, information has become a vital asset which needs to be planned for.

Among UNESCO programmes in information services are guidelines for planning Library and Information Services (LIS). Cooperation or resource sharing is described in LIS as an aspect of Library and Information Service which blossoms from National through Regional to International levels. The prevailing economic environment makes the idea of self-sufficiency in information gathering unrealistic and interdependence in resource sharing inevitable.

INITIATION OF COOPERATION:

Certain conditions, however, dictate the initiation of cooperation schemes⁶ and these are:

- i. The existence of information infrastructure.
- ii. Appreciation of the need to cooperate.
- iii. Formal acceptance of responsibilities involved in cooperation.
- iv. The availability of tools to facilitate cooperation.

NATIONAL COOPERATION:

If information is vital national resource for development it is imperative that it is harnessed in the most economic way so as to contribute meaningfully to national development. Competition among Information Service Centres must be discouraged and replaced by resource sharing activities. There should be some kind of cooperation between information services within a national information system. Schemes may initially operate on an informal basis; and every effort should be made to prevent the development of elitist attitudes in the various institutions.

As suggested in the NATIS concept, any conscious national effort must call for the creation of a central body for the coordination of national information resources. The body will be responsible for setting up an organizational framework for planning, control and the monitoring of the cooperation schemes.⁷

Possible ventures here will cover:

- i. Document resources - acquisition, central processing and storage

Cooperation here is feasible among libraries with similar objectives e.g. Special Libraries - University Library, Malkerns Station Library, Mananga Agricultural Management Library.

- ii. Inter-Library Lending. The efficiency and effectiveness of an inter-library lending system will require:

- a. The existence of such tools as Union Lists, Catalogues and National Bibliographies serving as navigational guides to what exists and where items are located. The Union Catalogues must adopt uniform procedures in document description.

- b. The existence of a Central Agency for coordinating the loan arrangements.

- c. The existence of good communication systems for delivery of requests.

- d. The availability of reprographic facilities especially in the case of loan of non-circulating documents.

- e. A formal agreement for sharing of overhead costs.

It is important to note that, "A country where the internal lending system works well is also one which will best meet requests from abroad. There will be no appreciable improvement at the international level so long as interlibrary loans are not organised within each country".⁸

SWAZILAND SCENE:

There is the existence of an array of Library and Information Services forming a basis of the national information infrastructure in Swaziland. There is, however, no developed, well coordinated interlending system in existence.

It is pertinent, however, to mention the introduction of a formal interlending system - THE INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM - between the University Library and the libraries of the Affiliated Institutions comprising:

Swaziland College of Technology
Swaziland Institute of Health Sciences
William Pitcher Training College
Ngwane Training College
Nazarene Training College

The participating institutions lack such requisite facilities as the Union Catalogue and Union Lists; but some measure of basic resource-sharing is, however, in operation.

The need for sharing-resources within Swaziland exists; the offer of the use of the resources of the University Library to External Borrowers for a minimal E10.00 per year is an attraction to several scholars. Librarians from outlying libraries -

Archives Library, Lobamba
Central Bank, Mbabane
Malkerns Research Station

have to travel long distance to search for documents and request for loans at informal levels from the University Library. The strain involved is consequently leading to wasteful duplication of resources in certain fields. The urgent need for a better organised system of interlending at the national level cannot, therefore, be overemphasized

*REGIONAL COOPERATION

Inadequacies in the provision of information at the national level have stimulated the need for regional cooperation. Countries in the same geographical area, for example the SADCC countries would engage in such collective, participatory activity based on individual national, coordinating bodies. And these bodies could be constituted as the regional policy-forming secretariat.

Collective retrieval tools facilitating access to the combined resources of the region include:

Union Catalogues
Union Lists of Serials
National Bibliographies
Library Directories
Information Specialist Directories
Guides to Research in Progress

* "Region", in the context of this paper, refers to integrated neighbouring countries in the same geographical area, sharing socioeconomic problems e.g. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

Cooperative ventures at this level may include the following activities.

- i. Clearing House Operation: In specific fields.
- ii. Referral Centres: For the receipt and answer of enquiries to specific questions not necessarily by physical reference to literature but by reference to Centres, Libraries or individuals.
- iii. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI). User profiles in machine-readable language run against governmental or commercial data banks. This is normally relevant for computerised systems and followed by document procurement.
- iv. Transfer of Technology. Setting up technical information services to promote the use of technological knowledge in industry; normally largely dependent on a good base of commercial, economic or technical collections.
- v. Information Analysis Centre. Compiling, interpreting information in such authoritative form as critical reviews, digests, annotated bibliographies and reports for users.
- vi. Translation Pool. A central translation service set up to break the language barrier. This service is helpful especially in a region where some of the countries do not use an international language (English or French). Portuguese calls for such a service in the SADCC region.
- vii. Reprographic Service. For the reproduction of non-circulating documents.

Supporting relevant services include the existence of a good communication network (telex and postal services) for the receipt and delivery of requests. Appropriate training programmes for personnel and users would enhance prospects of cooperation; and the establishment of a regional fund supported by the governments of countries involved in the scheme would be essential.

In Swaziland this scheme is centred on the South African Interlibrary Loan (ILL) system based at the State Library in Pretoria. It is this system that enables us to participate with some SADCC countries such as Botswana, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. Another notable area of cooperation is through the regional association, the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Libraries (SCECSAL).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

This comprises the sharing of resources - documents, bibliographic services, supply of information - across national and regional boundaries. The objective maybe achieved through:

- i. Direct agreement between institutions/agencies located in different regions.

A notable example is the British Lending Library in Boston Spa.¹⁰

- ii. Intergovernmental action. Agreement by governments at the U.N. level to cooperate in the provision of information. UNISIST, an intergovernmental programme set up to coordinate existing trends towards international cooperation and acting as a catalyst for development in the field of scientific and technical information and AGRIS, the International Information System for Agricultural Sciences and Technology are good examples.¹¹

- iii. International non-Governmental Bodies: The institutions cited here include organisations such as the International Federation of Library Associations which has been instrumental in setting up the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) and the Universal Availability of Publications (UAP).¹² The objective is to get each country to supply its own publications to other country. The system is boosted with the support tool, 'A guide to International Interlending Centres'.

At this level, Swaziland works directly with such international organisations as the British Lending Library to acquire documents that are not available locally or regionally. The Library of Congress is yet another body which assists tremendously through its Exchange Programme.

PROBLEMS IN COOPERATION:

Problems that may beset cooperation ventures could be listed as follows:

- i. Lack of proper information infrastructure
- ii. Poor organisational structures
- iii. Lack of proper planning and continuing education programmes e.g. specialised manpower for the operation of computer based system.
- iv. Technical incompatibilities between participants.
- v. Poor transport and communication facilities which may inhibit the development of satisfactory resource-sharing schemes.
- vi. Language barrier
- vii. Lack of funding resulting in unpredictable pressures.

- viii. A lack of momentum and commitment through changes of personnel and other external factors.
- ix. The fear of possible loss of national autonomy as the price for membership in a regional scheme.
- x. Legal and administrative constraints - national policies, customs and excise, copyright acts which may resist the steady flow of information across borders.

CONCLUSION:

In this age of technological advancement information systems are considered the prerequisite for overall socio-economic progress. They are necessary for industries, commercial undertakings and policy-making.

Swaziland's future depends to a great extent on the development of its information systems. Since no one country could cover all aspects of its information needs cooperation is the answer. Cooperation when effectively managed should

- i. Prevent unnecessary expensive duplication
- ii. Open to users existing services with wider coverage and scope of materials and services.
- iii. Assist staff training.
- iv. And satisfy national and community objectives.

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THE USER VIS-A-VIS THE INFORMATION PURVEYOR

by E.E. Kaungamno

The opening paragraph of the Second Part of Unesco's Draft Medium - Term Plan (1984-1989)¹ concerning Information Systems and Access to Knowledge rightly points out that the possession and use of knowledge are essential factors for progress. Information, especially scientific and technological information, the Plan emphasizes, has therefore come to be recognized as one of the main prerequisites for economic and social development. It is an indispensable factor in the national use of natural resources, the development of human resources, scientific and technological advancement, progress in agriculture, industry and services, the blossoming of culture and enhancement of social well-being. Consequently, assimilation of scientific and technological information is an essential precondition for progress in developing countries, the Plan further points out.

It is crucial that policy makers, planners and administrators should be provided with appropriate information. Access to precise and reliable information, the right time in a form most conveniently usable can help to arrive at quick decisions, take remedial action and plan for the future in addition to minimising the wastage of resources due to unnecessary and unintended re-invention. Further the availability of the right type of information can trigger new directions in research, development and managerial action. The Honourable Mwai Kibaki, then Kenya's Minister for Finance and Planning, had this to say in 1973 when opening a Conference Dissemination of Research Findings and Technology in Kenya:

We who deal with planning are all too aware that we do not make full use of the available information and knowledge in this country. More important we are all aware that we do not have enough information in the

fields in which we do have to make a decision. We are aware that statements we make are not backed up by detailed information.

The greatest problem in public institutions is the fact that the people who leave universities and are employed by government or state corporations and the private sector make up their minds that they have had enough education. You meet that same brilliant student five years later, and he has gone back to becoming quite illiterate in the science in which he got distinction as a graduate, a very serious handicap indicating apathy toward development. When you meet them, the only language in which such men and women can speak to you is that of ten years ago, when they left university. They are unaware of the numerous developments in that field which challenge what they have learned, which are much more immediately relevant to the situation now. They do not retain an open mind, do not read anything now and are not aware of the new challenges. This is a serious problem in a government where because of the civil service structure, people are promoted on the basis of seniority. By the time they get to the top, they are 20 years out of the university and if they have not updated their knowledge on all these matters, then you have gentlemen at the top to advise the Minister, who advises the Government on policy... They have not been kept informed partly because many of them are unwilling to read any more but more important, because there is no organized channel for that information which is available to reach them on a regular basis".²

This statement, in a way, summarized the issue of the user vis-a-vis the information purveyor. How should information in libraries, documentation centres, archives, etc, be disseminated to policy makers. In other words, what roles should librarians, information specialists, archivists play to ensure that our policy makers get the information they need for decision making?

To elucidate how complex the problem is let us take an example of corporations or companies. Typically three levels of management can be identified in such organizations.

- (a) Top Management - This is where you find policy makers and decision makers. Typical titles are Chief Executive, Managing Director or Director. This level of management coordinates the activities of the business as a whole and has a strategic view of the organization. It is concerned with establishing overall objectives for the business and developing appropriate policies so that the objectives may be achieved. Typical tasks include cooperate and long range planning, investment appraisal, organization restructuring, middle management appointments, monitoring performance of middle management.
- (b) Middle Management - Typical titles are Production Manager, Chief Accountant, Marketing Manager. This may be termed the tactical level of management whose overall functions is to implement top management policy. This level is responsible for setting sub objectives and for functional planning, heavily involved with monitoring and control procedures. Typical of the functions of middle management are purchasing, product planning, sales promotions etc. This level is responsible to top management and responsible for operational management.
- (c) Operational Management. Typical titles: Section leader, chargehand, foreman, supervisor, chief clerk. This level of management is concerned with the day to day processes of supervision and direction associated with normal activities of business : e.g. production, sales, accounts etc.

Decision making is an important part of the management task and takes place at all levels. In general the time scale from decision to results or action is long term at the strategic level, medium term at the tactical level and short term at the operation level. For example, a decision by the board of directors to change the marketing emphasis of a company from selling to wholesalers to direct selling to the public may take many years to implement. A tactical level decision by the production manager to change the routing of products through a factory may be implemented in weeks or

months; conversely a decision by the despatch foreman to send a particular package by rail rather than lorry will be affected virtually immediately.

The decision making process can be summarized into five stages:-

Understanding the background, recognition of the problem, analysis of alternatives, selection of solution, acceptance and implementation:

- (a) Understanding the background. This stage is concerned with understanding the circumstances surrounding the problem. Invariably there are many more factors surrounding a problem than a superficial appraisal would suggest.
- (b) Recognition of the problem. This is a vital, if not the most vital part of the process. The recognition of what is the real problem requires much questioning and thought.
- (c) Analysis of alternatives. This is the stage which is most susceptible to systematic treatment and many technical aids, (such as model building and simulation, decision trees, cost/volume/profit analysis) have been developed to help in this area.
- (d) Selection of solution. At this stage the judgement and preference of the decision maker are of importance.
- (e) Acceptance and implementation. At this stage the selected solution is communicated to those affected, their cooperation is gained.

Management and Information

All levels of management need information on which to base decisions, to plan, to organize, and to control. People gather information directly by observing and experiencing events, through formal and informal channels such as discussions, meetings and casual discussions,. However such methods generally do not give a complete picture nor do they provide information in

the correct form for intended use. As organisations grow there is a shift from informal to formal methods of disseminating information. The more formal information systems (via reports, operating statements, balance sheets etc) have the advantages of comprehensiveness, consistency and accuracy. Management Information Systems (MIS) therefore are vitally necessary in organizations.

Management Information System³ is an information system using formalized procedure to provide managers at all levels in all functions with appropriate information from all relevant sources (both internal and external to the firm) to enable them to make timely and effective decisions for planning, directing and controlling the activities for which they are responsible. Numerous factors influence the overall structure of MIS, the more important ones being:

- (a) The primary function of the organization.
- (b) The structure and levels of the organization. Is the organization composed of numerous sections and levels? What degree of autonomy have the sections/departments?
- (c) the degree of centralization or decentralization. Is the organization tightly controlled at the centre? What decisions/actions are the sections allowed to take?
- (d) Interaction with environment. To what extent is external information of importance?
- (e) The scale of operation. How many employees? What is the volume of transactions?

A broad division of the information supplied by an MIS relates to planning and control. The following diagram illustrates the broad relationship between the proportion of planning and control information received and the manager's place in the hierarchy:



Proportion of Planning and Control Information.

Information reaches managers from a MIS by way of a wide variety of analyses, statistics, statements etc which can generally be referred to as reports. These reports may be classified into three broad categories.:

- (a) Report providing passive background information. These are produced at fairly lengthy intervals in many cases long after the transaction involved took place.
- (b) Reports which provide control information to influence and guide current and short term, tactical and operating decisions.
- (c) Reports which provide statistical data for forecasting, corporate planning and longer term strategic planning.

To be effective the reports produced by an MIS should take account of numerous factors the main ones of which are described below.

- (a) Destination of the reports. Who is the recipient of a report? At what level of the organization is he/she? In general reports produced for top management, will be broader in scope and may cover many functional areas whereas reports produced for a manager at the operational level are more restricted in scope and will be limited to a specifically defined area of responsibility.

- (b) Uses of report. What will the report be used for? What decisions will be taken based on the report? The answers to such questions will be easier at the operational and tactical levels where activities and decisions are more structured and defined but may be more difficult to answer for top level management.
- (c) Urgency of report. The major factor influencing the urgency of a report is the effect on operation which would be caused by non arrival or delayed arrival of a particular report.
- (d) Detail. Detail should not be confused with accuracy. Accuracy means that a report should present a picture which will not mislead decision makers. The correct amount of detail is the minimum necessary for the task in hand. Superfluous detail (even though accurate) may cloud the issue and will add to processing and storage costs. The amount of detail normally varies with the level of management that uses the information. The higher the level the less detail would normally be provided; conversely at the operating level considerable detail would be necessary. Averaging, summarising, presenting information in graphical form, are ways in which details can be reduced.
- (e) Frequency. Much routine information is produced automatically per day, per week, per month or per year and is often vital for the manager concerned. However, too often reports are produced at set intervals without regard to their real need.

Investigations into information systems have found that much of the information which is ignored cannot influence the decision-making process and therefore it has no value. To enhance the value of the information it must be capable of being used and investigations show that information which has the following characteristics is more likely to be used:

- (a) Relevance - i.e. appropriate to the manager's sphere of activity.

- (b) Timing - i.e. produced and available to the manager in time for him to use.
- (c) Accurate - i.e. sufficiently accurate for it to be relied upon by the manager and for the purpose for which it is intended.
- (d) Understandable - i.e. in a form and format readily usable by the manager.

What has been described so far is a typical set up of many bureaucratic organizations whose policy makers and decision makers have special information needs and who consequently ought to be served in a special way. Information purveyors have to understand this kind of situation. Therefore, how should they respond?

Study of Information needs (User Analysis)

Information needs of users, as well as their use of information must be studied thoroughly. To obtain a good background of users' needs it is necessary to find out the function and structure of the organizations they serve and the following methods may be found helpful.⁴

(a) Organizational

- (i) Visits to departments and branches of the organization and meetings with main groups of users.
- (ii) Attendance at planning and review meetings.
- (iii) Listening to talks, lectures, or symposia organized by senior staff on the work of their departments.

(iv) Studying annual, progress and research reports, organizational manuals, publicity handouts etc.

(v) Taking part in training courses designed to give a better understanding of their organizational aims and activities.

(b) Users

The information users themselves can be investigated. The first essential thing to do is to know as many users as possible in person - their qualifications, professional positions, the purposes for which they need information etc. All these and other aspects of the use of information are studied by the following sociological research methods:

- (a) Questionnaires
- (b) Oral interview
- (c) Direct observation
- (d) Case study.

User Interest Profiles

The user interest profile is established according to information needs of users which as discussed before can be identified by way of interviews, questionnaires, etc. Profile construction is based on the user's statements of his interests.

Using techniques described above, an information purveyor is able to build an information service capable of meeting the needs of users within the organization; funds and manpower permitting. The data gathered through various research methods can be the basis for designing a current awareness service such as the following:

Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)

SDI service provides a limited group of users with the information of their interest and professional needs. It is a current awareness mechanism through which the individual information user can expect to receive regular notifications of new documents and data in accordance with his/her statement of interest or profile.

Other methods used for current awareness are:

- (a) Journal circulation. Users notify information personnel what journals they would like to scan. These are circulated according to the list of names of users.
- (b) Content pages. Content pages of journals are photocopied and distributed to interested users.
- (c) Current Awareness Bulletin. Periodical bulletins are produced to alert users about current information.

Cooperation of Information Centres

The exponential growth of published information and the resultant "information explosion" means that no single information centre can be self-sufficient in information and be able to serve its users efficiently. Information centres must cooperate. Resource sharing enables users to exploit information stored in various information centres and to benefit from them. To ignore resource sharing would mean for our users, and especially for our scientists, to run into the risk of "re-inventing the wheel", that is, of remaking things that have already been done and of not benefiting from other peoples' experience and results. No one can afford this risk.

Unfortunately, this increasing important function of the information is not yet recognized by most policy makers, decision makers, administrators and planners in our countries. These people must be convinced and made aware of the importance of

information and that information centres require proper investments and means, just as other activities which are considered as major components of a country's development.

One of the major consequences of the considerable growth of published information is that it cannot any longer be stored and retrieved by conventional methods which were quite efficient in the past. New techniques have to be used. Computers have to be used to handle large data bases.

A second consequence is that a professional can no longer keep himself efficiently informed of what is going on in his/her professional field without external help. In the past, a specialist could keep abreast of major developments in his/her field by his/her own reading of some periodicals and books. Now the amount of reading a single specialist can do will cover a smaller and smaller percentage of the total amount of published knowledge which might be of interest to him/her. That is to say he/she requires help from specialized information services such as S.D.I.

A third consequence is that intensive cooperation between information centres has become a vital necessity. The reason for this is obvious. The amount of information to be handled, the very costly methods and tools needed, oblige information centres to share their resources for all their activities - acquisition, processing, storage, retrieval, dissemination. No one centre alone can cope with the situation if it remains isolated.

To conclude, the information purveyor should study the needs of users, policy makers in this case, if he/she is to satisfy them. The three levels of management cited, demonstrate the nature and kind of information which should be supplied particularly to Top Management. In trying to meet the information needs of management, the information purveyor is confronted with many problems as indicated earlier. Cooperation through resource sharing is suggested as one of the solutions to meeting users' information needs.

There are other factors which could improve the dissemination of information to users in a country. These are:

- (a) Information infrastructure. The main elements of the infrastructure are:
- (i) Manpower resources.
 - (ii) Libraries, documentation centres, archives etc.

An information infrastructure in itself does not guarantee the full exploitation of both local and international resources unless there exists a well established national information system.

(b) A National Information System

A national information system is basically a network of existing information resources so coordinated as to reinforce and enhance the activities of individual information units, and thus enable specific categories of users to receive the information relevant to their needs and abilities.

- (c) National Information Policy. For a national information system to be efficiently managed it must be backed up by a national information policy which ensures among other things, that the national information system fulfils the following fundamental objectives:⁵

- (i) it assists in the achievement of national goals and priorities through the provision of relevant information as need by each individual and every sector of the society.
- (ii) it assists in the development of the nation's human resources by the provision of effective libraries, documentation and archival services for every level of education and training, both formal and informal

- (iii) it assists and stimulates economic productivity through the provision of information needed, for research and all stages of its practical application.
- (iv) it fosters the understanding at all levels that the national information service is an essential tool for development in the reorganization of social and economic structure.
- (v) it develops every means of ensuring that the information services are made fully available to all sections of the population, and
- (vi) it heightens the nation's awareness of its cultural heritage and fosters its further improvement.

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THE APPLICATION OF THEORY TO PRACTICE

by S.B. Monageng

The following statement made by Dr. D. Mtumbuka, Minister of Education and Culture of Zimbabwe, at the opening of the jointly-sponsored UNDP/UNECA-PADIS/ABC-SADCC Consultative Meeting of Documentalists and Information Scientists, Policy makers, Researchers and Experts on Technical Cooperation from SADCC Governments, held in Harare, Zimbabwe in February 1982, appears very appropriate for this meeting:

"..... no matter how ambitious our plans might be and our unswerving dedication and determination to ensure their realisation, we continue to be likened to the man who tried to reach for the moon on a haystack which was soon blown by all sorts of winds, if we do not have access and use of adequate information in drawing up those plans."

Similar statements to this are repeated in various other corners. This is clear proof that information is the most basic resource upon which informed decision-making should be based. The question, however, is to what extent this is taken into consideration when it comes to actual practice. It appears that despite repeated calls and commitment to give this some recognition, there are practical problems. A close examination of the problem reveals that the problem lies not so much with the availability or lack of information but with the fact that the providers of information - Librarians/Documentalists/Information Scientists - are not afforded their due recognition. Therefore, whilst in theory they are the ones assigned the responsibility to provide the necessary information, their word carries very little weight when it comes to justifying any increase in financial and human resources. As a result they are faced with a two-sided problem - one of trying to do their best in providing information services given very serious constraints, and another of trying to convince decision-makers or politicians as to the importance and indispensability of information and the need to incorporate it into national development planning. The implication therefore is

that we may have all the theories as to how we think we can improve the provision of information services, but we keep coming up against obstacles in trying to put them into practice.

The problem of lack of recognition of our field is not the only one even though it is a serious one. This paper will attempt to discuss some of the other problems like how practicable it is to participate in regional and international information systems. Such a discussion will automatically touch on compatibility/standardisation, coordination of informations services, and human and financial resources. We all know that all the problems, besides that of lack of recognition, centre around the availability of funds. The information providers will only feel recognised when they are informed that their budget for any one year has been doubled or even tripled. This will prove that the decision-makers who also determine how the cake should be split, have finally recognised the importance of information as a basic resource.

However, since we have to keep in mind theory versus reality, we should not be unrealistic and forget that situations will vary from country to country, and even from one institution to another within one country. As such, financial provisions are likely to vary considerably from country to country, depending on variables like the availability of natural resources and therefore the state of development. The argument therefore that the availability of funds will facilitate the application of certain theories will not apply to the same extent.

It becomes clear as I look at the issue of theory versus practicability that much as we may try to separate one point from another, we are moving around a vicious circle. As soon as we identify lack of funds as the most serious problem, we realise that once we have the money, there is not much we can do without human resources. Money and physical facilities can only be effectively used if an adequate number of properly qualified persons are available.

We do, for instance, recognise the need for research in matters related to information services. This stimulation and support of research in information science is necessary in order to improve the quality of services and to enhance the understanding of the information problems of society by the professionals in the field. This realisation does not bear much fruit since the biggest limitation is human resources. We are all familiar with situations where an institution that is supposed to be manned by three professionals, for instance, has to make do with only one staff member who may not necessarily be a professional. The same staff member will be divided between professional duties and administrative responsibilities. This leaves no time for researching into the issues that would improve the service in not only that institution but also in others at a national level. Therefore whilst in theory it is very clear as to what we should do in order to improve information services, in practice there are always two alternatives. Whichever alternative is chosen is bound to cause some imbalance.

Before I go on to discuss the other practical problems inherent in the provision or improvement of information services, I would like to share with colleagues four pieces of advice that I noted during a recent course on management training. I noted these particularly because I had in mind exactly the same question I posed earlier - how practicable these will be in a number of situations:

- do not accept the idea of having 'backlogs' or there is something wrong with your organisation.
- make the documentation centre a support service of the central organisation so that it is in a position to dialogue with all the departments.
- give it the responsibility of its own budget like any other department.

- entrust the service to a properly qualified person.

Whilst it is a fact that the above statements are our professional responsibility, to what extent are we able to realise this responsibility?

The next section of this paper will briefly look at cooperation as means of providing and improving information services. The idea of cooperation as a service tool is preached all the time. Built into it is the need for coordination. Coordination involves making sure that there is compatibility to facilitate cooperation. It also involves money and personnel. Looking back at the first section of this paper, however, it looks like we are back where we started from.

At the national level, we need to know what information is generated in the country before we attempt to embark on various cooperative ventures. If I may quote the case of Botswana, no Government Department or Ministry produces a publications list. Private consultancy firms produce reports which never seem to circulate. It seems therefore that if we Librarians/Documentalists/Information Scientists are aware of the importance of information for informed decision-making, we should be looking first at public awareness. We should aim at making the policy-makers aware of the duplication of efforts that occurs as a result of information not being disseminated and therefore the need to pool all this information together. Since this will be too big a pool for any one information institution to manage, the next step should be to allocate responsibility amongst the existing institutions. Some duplication will still occur but it will be a step in the right direction. There is already an attempt in Botswana by the Information and Documentation Coordinating Committee to deal with this problem - the University Library catering for the academic community; the Botswana National Library Service playing a public library role; the Botswana National Archives attempting to keep a comprehensive collection of materials on Botswana; and the National Institute of Development Research and Documentation focusing on unpublished, socio-economic development information on Botswana.

This does not in any way imply that Botswana is anywhere near solving the problem of information coordination. There are still many obstacles to be overcome.

The suggestion therefore is that whilst we are aware of the importance of cooperation we should not overlook the practical problems. Cooperation is not in itself bad since it has positive connotations. It can, however, come to mean compromise and it is this compromise that we should be careful about once we cross national borders. Any mechanism for cooperation should ensure the mutual benefit of all parties concerned. Would regional or international cooperative ventures for instance, solve our immediate internal problems?

I would like to end my paper with a quotation relating to 'World System of Scientific and Technical Information (UNISIST)':

There are obviously a number of areas pertinent to UNISIST objectives which are unlikely to bring much benefit to some of the developing countries at their stage of progress.

Three of the areas identified are mentioned. The first one is that standard bibliographical formats cannot be introduced where no bibliographies exist. Secondly, there can be no international register of periodicals where there is no national register. The last one is that there is little point in establishing guidelines for abstracting services and information analysis centres where the collection of basic national bibliographical data is still in its first stages.

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THE ROLE OF A NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

by N. Longwe

Information and education are basic requirements for economic development in every nation. Library materials such as books periodicals, films etc. are indispensable to all levels of education from training in literacy to University Education. Such materials are also of basic importance in the dissemination of social and economic information. Therefore libraries and information services have an essential role to play in the economic and social progress of every nation by allowing those involved in economic and social progress access to the information contained in these materials. Science and technology is also increasingly having a greater influence on the progress of nations. There is therefore a great need for more scientific technological and business information for researchers, administrators, Government officials and professionals in various fields. Good libraries and information services also can contribute greatly to the enrichment of cultural values of people lives.

Libraries have been in existence for a long time and yet their contribution to economic and social progress of nations have not been fully realised. This is especially true in developing countries than in developed countries where they are now being increasingly accepted as integral parts of a country's resources. In the third world the impact libraries can make to the social and economic progress of nations is yet to be felt. We shall examine some of the factors that may have impeded this breakthrough in library development in the third world especially in this part of the world.

Traditionally, the library function was seen as that of preserving documents to meet the expressed or assumed needs of users. The librarian then was seen merely as custodian of these documents. This library function is now beginning to change to a more active role which has necessitated the emergency of

information services. Information services play an active role in ensuring that all users and potential users of information are kept up to date with progress in their special fields. The information managers of these information services do not wait until a need is expressed, they are aware of these needs and so can anticipate them. Information needs refers to data, facts, that an individual ought to have to solve a practical problem or enable the user to perform his work better. Once this need is perceived the information is processed and then taken to the user in an acceptable form. Therefore taking information to the user or to use the library and information science term, "dissemination of information" is an important aspect of information services.

ORIGINS OF INFORMATION SERVICES

In order for us to understand and appreciate the change in library function briefly discussed above, it is important for us to know how information services originated.

Information services originated in the libraries of industrial firms based on advanced technology. These libraries realized that it was essential that information useful to the organisation should be directed immediately on publication to those members who could make best use of it for the benefit of the organisation.² This need was realised on the basis that with the evergrowing volume of publication resulting from the growth of research, it was not humanly possible for the research worker to scan all the new publications and still find time to do his routine work.

This development led to the idea of a service of information to be provided by one of the staff whose primary duty would be to organise the literature and direct information to the relevant people. This is the context in which information services today must be seen to operate.

The question we, the librarians of this part of the world must ask ourselves is, how far have we gone in applying this new concept in our libraries in our own countries? I am inclined to agree with Mr. Uta when he states that, "my concern is that most existing services in this region are book based rather than information based. That is to say that the general objective is to build large collections and that's the end of the story. Ideally the objective should include making information available and accessible."³

There is therefore a need for librarians of this part of the world to adopt an active role by making information available and accessible if our libraries and information services are to make an impact on the socioeconomic progress of our nations. We cannot afford to remain passive any more.

The other factor that has impeded the growth of libraries and information service resulting in failure to make meaningful contribution to the socioeconomic development of nations in this part of the world is the lack of coordination and the tendency by some information services to develop in isolation without regard to the economic and social conditions prevailing at any particular time in a country. However, recent developments in library and information profession have brought about the realisation that the education, information and cultural requirements need to be studied, and the services to meet them planned on a wider scale and that these should be viewed as integral parts of larger systems, and not just as unitary operations related to their own immediate environments.⁴ Therefore for information services to be recognised as an integral part of the country's resources, they need to identify themselves with the country's economic and social policies. For this to be done, an analysis of users needs as well as a country's national objectives is required, and the services to meet these needs planned on those lines. These need to be incorporated into national development plans.

The need for coordination of information services has also been realised and efforts are being made towards formulating information policies based on the understanding that information plays a vital role in economic, social and cultural development. UNESCO recognises this role and has played a leading role in impressing upon national Governments the importance of information in development and urged them to take positive steps towards improving the prevailing poor information services. The 1974 recommendations on NATIS (National Information System) concepts called for among other things... "an overall structure encompassing all services involved in the provision of information for all sectors of the community and all users to ensure that all engaged in political, economic, scientific and cultural activities receive the necessary information enabling them to render their fullest contribution to the whole community."⁵ In keeping with NATIS concept, a National Information System must play a leading role in the provision of information for socioeconomic and cultural development by ensuring that all engaged in socioeconomic and cultural activities receive the necessary information needed to carry out their various activities to enable them make wise decisions based on the experiences of others and on the availability of options, as well as to keep abreast of new developments in their field. This later aspect is particularly important because knowledge is not static, it is dynamic. New developments take place everyday in various fields. It is imperative therefore for those engaged in the various fields of socioeconomic and cultural endeavours to keep abreast with the latest developments in their specific fields. The users of socioeconomic and cultural information may vary from policy-makers, government administrators, professionals e.g. lawyers, doctors etc.

The point that libraries and information services need to be planned in relation to the socioeconomic and cultural situations in each country has already been made. It is important therefore to have information services which can contribute positively towards solving some of the economic social problems found in each country. In developing countries, some of the most pressing social problems are poverty, ignorance and disease. The solution

to these social problems can be obtained through the provision of relevant information e.g. provision of primary health care literature and related information to educate people of the importance of good health practices, the provision of simple instructions of improved farming methods to farmers to ensure increased crop production etc. Also the problem of illiteracy without which the above objectives would not be met should be given due attention. Information services in developing countries need to play an active role in the maintenance of literacy which in turn has a bearing on the socioeconomic development of nations.

FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE

The functions of a National Information Service may vary from one nation to another. These are also influenced by such factors as time, political, social and economic conditions within each nation.

Generally, the objectives of a National Information Service should be:-

- (1) to provide the necessary support for intellectual efforts in all sectors of human endeavours directed at progress and development.
- (2) to ensure the availability of comprehensive and complete collections of resources as possible and ensure access to these resources both within and outside the nation's boundaries
- (3) to act as a coordinating centre for the various information services in a country as well as act as a referral centre.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In order for a National Information Service to make a positive contribution to the socioeconomic and cultural development of a country it needs to be structured in a certain pattern.

Consideration needs to be given to the information requirements of a country also taking into account the existing information services.

Three organisational patterns may emerge

- (a) through a National Centre
- (b) through National Centres for different subject disciplines and ;
- (c) through centres based on academic or research institutions or learned and professional bodies supplemented by national provision and coordination.

Some countries may combine aspects of the three approaches. Whatever pattern emerges, the central role of a National Information Centre will be that of a coordinating the various components within each system.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that in planning national information services, the information professional must learn to accept changes in national policies of their countries in the socioeconomic and cultural field and plan their services with these needs in mind. This is one sure way the information services can attract funds from the state for their continued development. Information managers also need to accept ideas which are outside their discipline. They must learn something of economics, social science etc. in order to determine how they can best use them to further social, economic and cultural progress. If not properly planned, information services will remain poorly organised and equipped. Without a clear definition of their cultural, social and economic roles they will continue to be unenterprising and unable to win the political support and obtain resources that are essential to them.

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**IMPROVEMENT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES: AN
ASSESSMENT OF PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS PRESCRIBED UNDER THE PAN
AFRICAN DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (PADIS) PROGRAMME**

by D. Abate

IMPROVEMENT ON NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES

My presentation today on the improvement of national and regional information services revolves around two themes. The first relates to the fact that the poor state in which we find national information services today is contingent upon a host of factors including policies, plans, manpower, technologies, institutions, methodologies and standards and so on and so forth. The second relates to the fact that these factors operate in combination and, therefore, any action to be taken to remedy the situation whether it is corrective or developmental, needs to address these problems in an integrated manner.

In the first part of my presentation I wish to review what we at PADIS perceive as problems and obstacles to the smooth delivery of information services at the national level in African countries - the problems at the regional level being mainly symptomatic of the shortcomings prevailing at the national level. In the second part of my presentation, I will outline how the PADIS programme attempts and intends to deal with these problems.

By far the most important obstacle to the overall improvement of information services in Africa has been the inadequacy of financial and material resources made available to libraries, documentation centres and other information dissemination mechanisms. The cause to these inadequacies is none other than the low priority our Governments attach to this important field of endeavour in total contradiction to their developmental aspirations.

The situation has been exasperated by the austerity measures and increasing commitments to planned expenditures enacted by African Governments as the economic crisis they have been facing

worsened. However reasonable and desirable these enactments prove to be, it is to our dismay that development plans and budgets often exclude and invariably underemphasize financial and policy requirements for information services. The error lies in the habit of our planners, incidentally the most frequent seekers of information, who continue to compare information and documentation projects with other national priorities. We information practitioners maintain that the reverse is more rewarding, i.e. to use information to set national priorities.

Very few of our countries have national policies and legislation that govern and regulate the organization and utilization of information. Where they exist they are either poorly formulated or remain unenforced. The cause mainly lies in the fact that there are no central agencies responsible for information that have the powers and mandates the particular situation requires. Even when such structures exist, their tasks are not adequately defined or they lack the authority or the capacity to establish a realistic policy and plan and defend it at the national legislative and executive levels. Legislation in the areas under consideration still does not exist in some countries, it is restricted in others and not enforced in the majority of cases. While it should not be assumed that a legislative framework would resolve all the bottlenecks, it is nonetheless true that good legislation facilitates the creation and development of infrastructures. Along with the scarcity of space, equipment and qualified personnel, the inadequacy of legal deposit legislation or its application has been an impedient to the organization of national bibliographic control. Even in those countries where national bibliographies are produced there have been cases where the deposit legislation excluded government publications.

In many countries, there is no central point within the government to which requests for government publications could be addressed. It is also observed that there were often no set standards for printing, numbering and circulation of government publications and of indexing and abstracting services on same impedes their full utilization.

Equally lacking is reliable information on sources of information such as directories of libraries and documentation centres, national union catalogues, etc.

More recently, as governments give increasing attention to enhancement of national information management capabilities, lack of basic information and data on available information resources and facilities are precluding the planning, design and establishment of national information systems and services. As such, the need for comprehensive surveys of existing information management capabilities are becoming evident.

Even more serious than the lack of well planned infrastructure at the national level is the shortage of adequately trained information manpower. This shortage is mainly due to a lack of an adequate number of African-based training programmes and facilities. It has been observed that numerous libraries, documentation and information centres in Africa are being run by people who to start with, had insufficient formal training in library and documentation science. In many cases when trained personnel were managing libraries and documentation centres, they had been trained in schools of library science which had a rather traditional approach to librarianship and information science. While the training of librarians in the traditional techniques of librarianship proves an essential manpower component of any properly functioning system, there is equally a definite need for training a cadre of professionals capable of working with and utilizing modern information handling techniques to enable African countries to keep abreast of the tremendous advances that are being made in the information field.

Another serious shortcoming is the lack of middle-level information specialists and technicians who are required to shoulder the major share of the day-to-day operational responsibilities. Similarly, shortages of technicians needed to maintain and operate reprographic equipment and other information technologies is evident.

A survey conducted by one of our colleagues in 1983 under the auspices of the DSE revealed that out of eleven East and Southern African countries, only one had an educational institution that offered courses at the degree level, only two at the diploma level and three at the certificate level. Five had none or were planning to establish one. Needless to say educational institutions offering postgraduate studies are even more rare.

Further, there are even fewer training opportunities in modern information handling techniques. At present, most of the training in this area is acquired abroad.

As regards the status accorded to librarians, documentalists and archivists, it has been observed that many African countries would still need to take action to accord this profession the recognition, status and remuneration it deserves vis a vis other professions. The efforts of library associations to this end have been notable though much remains to be done.

Now, having dwelt upon the policy, planning, manpower and training aspects of the problems surrounding national information management capabilities, perhaps it is time to make reference to specific problems related to the delivery of information services. One of the most important observations made with regard to library, documentation and information services is the fact that they had been established without the necessary background studies and plans having first been made.

Results have been that their collections and services are often inappropriate to actual needs. Equally sad, such services have not been able to cope with the changes and new challenges their clients encounter. As much as information services have failed to cope with the changing needs of their clientele, organizations and institutions have equally neglected to plan the information support they require when they expand or intensify their overall programmes.

As the already few services manned by inadequate personnel fail to meet their actual and immediate needs, researchers have commonly turned to information centres located in the developed world where some of them happen to be commercial services who, in the first instance, obtained the source materials locally.

Although a few, and some of them efficient, secondary information services produce retrospective bibliographies and current awareness bulletins, it has been difficult, under the circumstances, to procure copies of the documents referred to. This is mainly related to the fact that secondary information services do not support document delivery; the lack, or expensiveness, of reproduction; and, the poor state of postal and telecommunication services.

Although many countries do produce national bibliographies thereby contributing to national bibliographic control, these do not ensure full control of published literature and even more so of unpublished literature.

The absence of a standard policy on the confidentiality of documents has been known to restrict the free flow of information amongst Government agencies. Quite often this happened in a situation where although the information was freely available within the Ministry or Department from which it originated, it was prohibited for wider circulation. In other cases restrictions placed at the time the publication was produced remained in effect long afterward although these may not have been warranted.

Finally, one cannot avoid but accept the fact that the services offered by most libraries and documentation centres are lacking in variety. Proven services such as SDI are largely unavailable. Advanced services such as information repackaging and state-of-the-art reviews, though they may be the most applicable to particular needs, are still unheard of.

Having said this, it is perhaps worthwhile to comment upon the scope and categories of information handled by specialized libraries and documentation centres. The scope of an information service is determined by the needs of its immediate users. The documentation centre of a Ministry of Agriculture develops its holdings primarily, to meet the needs of users working in that field. But the problem one encounters is that this specialized library or documentation centre restricts its holdings to literature and documents only whereas the needs of its users may very well transcend such categories of information. In short, current services are narrowly defined. Why documentation centres do not handle numerical and other factual information in their respective subject scopes remains a puzzle.

Here, reference to the utility of information is perhaps in order. Much remains to be done in terms of increasing the volume of information inputs in development planning, in research and development work, in management and public administration, and in production endeavours. The widespread attitude that information workers do not belong to the mainstream of development activities is a false image aggravated by the low status accorded to the profession. The information worker should not wait to receive a request or an order to prepare the requisite information support for development pursuits. Rather, he should anticipate, plan organize and deliver the information support required for each and every element of development activity.

In this context, the absence of offensive information marketing strategies is another barrier which diminishes the usefulness of information services and therefore of information itself. An effective educational drive to promote the utilities of information has also been long overdue. To this end, the first task should be to enhance consultations amongst information workers themselves and to expand the chances for them to share their experiences and plans.

As stated earlier, the problems related to the smooth delivery of regional information services are symptomatic of national level shortcomings. Regional information services signify transborder

information flow. This transborder flow could be between two national level or between a national and a regional institution. The transfer of information between two institutions located in different countries suffers from the same sort of problems as the transfer of information within a country. However, crossborder transfers are exasperated by confidentiality issues, language barriers, use of incompatible methods and standards as well as by postal delays. In cases where payment has to be made for services rendered, the bureaucratic difficulties and delays encountered by a foreign user are altogether discouraging.

Now, I will relate to you the historical background financing, plans, policies, approaches, activities and outputs of the Pan-African Documentation and Information System - PADIS for short, and the progress that has been made to-date in implementing the PADIS regional programme.

PADIS is a project of African Governments being executed, on their behalf, by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and financed by UNDP, IDRC, and the African Development Bank. The Central Co-ordination Office of PADIS was inaugurated in January 1980. PADIS is at present the only regional entity that has the sole purpose of addressing the constraints to the improvement of information and documentation services.

The PADIS Central Co-ordination Office implements the regional programme which involves two elements:

- (a) A technical co-operation scheme to assist African countries to develop their information management capability; and,
- (b) A scheme for a multi-sectoral co-operative information system and network to increase the accessibility of relevant information and its exchange.

We will continue our discussions by elaborating upon these schemes and by examining how their implementation will contribute towards overcoming the obstacles raised earlier. As I mentioned

at the beginning of my presentation, any action to improve the state of information and documentation should be comprehensive and integrated. We shall also see how these two schemes are supportive of each other.

The PADIS technical assistance scheme involves advisory services, training, promotion of resources sharing and harmonization of information and documentation programmes.

The strategy adopted for improving the state of information and documentation in Africa gives priority to strengthening national level capacities. The initial task in each country is the designation and strengthening of an existing or establishment of an altogether new national agency to be responsible for information and documentation affairs. Once this institutional ambiguity is clarified, operational as well as superstructural activities are to be progressively implemented depending on the situation and problems at hand.

To this end, advisory services are provided in the areas of identification of potential national centres; in the design of national information and documentation systems and networks; in the preparation of national information policies and plans; and, in the design and preparation of information and documentation projects. Such advisory services are meant to assist institution building and to progressively lay superstructural foundations that will govern and regulate information and documentation activities. It is expected that such advisory services will contribute to solving problems associated with the absence of policies, plans, institutions and the like.

Short-term courses, seminars, workshops as well as attachment training at other centres will be provided, initially to a core team and progressively to a wider group. The training to be offered to the core team will be in such a way that operational information collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination are underway within the soonest possible time. The training of the

wider group will be to increase participation of subnational centres and to lead towards the realization of a national network.

This training plan is expected to meet, though partially the need to upgrade the skills of existing librarians and documentalists and to enhance the use of common, and compatible methodologies and, to the extent possible, to introduce modern information handling techniques. As such the training programme is linked to the development and replication of information processing standards, norms and methodologies to be discussed later on. Advanced, longer-term, attachment training opportunities will however be restricted to managers of information and documentation centres to assist the evolution of a leadership cadre.

Promotion of resources sharing features prominently within the PADIS technical assistance scheme. It is a necessity that scarce material and human resources are optimally utilized. To this end, facilities and expertise already available, and to be implanted in the future, at the PADIS subregional centres and at the Central Co-ordination Office will be at the service of present and future national centres. This implies that national centres have access to the personnel, the printing, reprographic and computer equipment as well as the information collection residing at PADIS and its subregional centres free of charge until such time that they develop their own capabilities. This sort of resource sharing is expected to be progressively applied at the national level so that the sectoral and ministerial centres will have access to facilities and personnel that are either too expensive or uneconomical for each one of them to possess. The fourth element of the PADIS technical assistance scheme involves the harmonization of information and documentation programmes in order to avoid redundancy, duplication of efforts and expenses. This will be handled in a consultative manner and by systematically sharing responsibilities and tasks that are of benefit to two or more parties. Development of methodologies and

certain types of information services such as SDI and information repackaging and analysis are particularly amenable to harmonization efforts.

Therefore, promotion of resources sharing and harmonization of tasks and activities are expected to provide partial solutions to problems associated with the material and financial shortages commonly encountered by information and documentation centres while maximizing the use of already devoted resources. Before proceeding further in describing the remaining elements of the PADIS plans and programmes, I once again wish to emphasize the fact that the designation of an existence of or the establishment of a new national information and documentation centre or agency is central to the success of national efforts and therefore of the technical assistance to be provided by PADIS. The low priority attached to the information and documentation field can be altered only with a relentless, practical, relevant and coordinated action. This action, so we believe, is best brought about under the leadership of an agency solely devoted to this purpose.

The second spectrum of PADIS activities, as stated earlier, involves the setting up of a regional cooperative information system and network for the collection, classification, processing, storage, retrieval, dissemination and utilization of information.

First let me attempt to define the scope of the cooperative information system. The system is supposed to handle both numerical and non-numerical, bibliographic, referral as well as factual information relevant for ideas forming, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and research. This information will be organized, as appropriate, along missions, disciplines or sectors. The following are considered to be the subsystems of the system:

- (a) bibliographic information;
- (b) statistical information;
- (c) factual information;
- (d) referral information on capacities and resources; and,
- (e) extra-African scientific and technological information.

Within the bibliographic information subsystem we have what we may refer to as components under which will be compiled information dealing with different disciplines and sectors. The first of these components deals with mainly documents relating to macro-planning and overall development literature including documents on facts, trends, analysis, financing, evaluation, etc. of development programmes. Original documents and references collected and classified under this component are referred to the PADIS-DEV file. PADIS is the regional coordinator for this cooperative information system on development sciences. There are other sectoral files or components, which complement this development file, in the fields of industry, agriculture, labour relations, etc. which are, at the international level, coordinated by UNIDO, FAO and ILO respectively. Copies of this computerized files are available at PADIS and which it uses to provide information services to African users. With the progressive and strengthening of national and subnational sectoral information centres, it is hoped to increase the contributions to and deriving benefits from these sectoral files by African countries.

The statistical information subsystem, as the name implies deals with statistical data. One would naturally enquire why PADIS as a documentation and information system needs to involve itself with statistical data. This is so for two reasons: firstly, statistical information services suffer from a large number of problems that are also faced by libraries and documentation services, particularly as it relates to the dissemination and utilization of information. This is from the organizational angle. From the users' angle, there is a unity in users' needs. No users' needs are wholly satisfied by documents or by statistics. Even the statistician needs some documents and the librarian some statistics; to take two extremes.

Traditionally, usable statistics are published in statistical abstracts which are made available to individual subscribers as well as for consultation at libraries and documentation centres. However, such abstracts contain highly aggregate statistics restricting full use of data collected through expensive undertakings such as censuses and surveys. Therefore, activities have been underway to develop methodologies which have now reached the stage of being replicated at national centres and which make it possible to produce using computerized means, statistical data at the lowest levels of aggregation. Under such schemes, it will be possible to have, for example, import and export statistics between the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa, say, in scented soaps. One can imagine the difficulties one will encounter to acquire such statistics, unfortunately the most usable statistics, at present.

The third subsystem in the cooperative system is factual information that is both non statistical and non bibliographic - management information systems, trade informations systems, patent and standards information system etc. fall under this scheme. Due to the nature of such systems and the priorities PADIS attached to bibliographic and statistical information systems have not permitted, as yet, the practical definition and implementation of this subsystem.

The fourth subsystem PADIS is dealing with involves the setting up of a regional referral system in support of technical cooperation among African countries and with a view to enable them to share their skills, capacities and development experiences. Therefore, the categories of information handled under this scheme have led to the creation of a data base on African experts which will shortly be complemented with a referral data base on institutions whose capacities (laboratory and testing facilities, unique experience in consulting and engineering work, etc.) could be of service to technical cooperation.

During the third phase development of the referral subsystem it will be attempted to set up a data base on the experiences gained by African countries in the process of implementing development projects both on-going and terminated; their experiences in negotiating multinational contracts; etc.

Even more important than this intra-African cooperation lies the benefit each country will acquire in having a systematic account of the skills and know-how its experts possess and the monitoring of development projects it is implementing.

The fifth subsystem involves enhancing access to the scientific and technological information available in other developing regions and the developed world as well and which is considered to be of relevance to Africa's development efforts. This is going to be made possible through intermediary arrangements until in capabilities make possible direct access.

Having described the components of the cooperative information system, we shall proceed to a description of the regional network. It is planned that the PADIS network will consist of at least one national participating centre from each African country; four subregional coordination offices; a number of institutional participating centres; and, a central coordination office. Each of this participating centres is to be responsible for providing inputs into the subregional and regional systems respectively, and for deriving outputs from the system on behalf of their national users. In the case of the institutional participating centres which are, incidentally, African regional and subregional organizations charged with leading roles in particular fields of development (technology, management, standards and patents, etc.) These will serve as lead agencies in their respective fields of competence and thereby, liaising with national institutions charged with similar responsibilities.

Now, a network signifies not only an identificationn of participating centres but also the physical means for the flow of inputs and outputs between participating centres and between these centres and their users. In the developed world, the

growth of tele-, photo- and computer technologies; their integration into telematics; and the reductions in costs resulting from advances in such technologies has made possible the access and transfer of information a relatively very easy affair. We know for a fact this is not the case now in Africa and will not be so for at least a decade or two to come. We also know that to attempt to transfer information at its present speed is neither efficient nor acceptable. An intermediate solution needs to be identified and for which purpose PADIS will be commissioning a study during 1987. Perhaps, an enhanced postal scheme similar to the diplomatic courier is a reasonable approach.

It should be very simple to conceive from the above the dimensions of the PADIS Programme - technical, financial, coordination as well as in prioritization. Therefore, in the process of setting priorities given limited levels of financial and technical resources and given the limit of coordination; it has been determined that one of the priority tasks should be the development of norms, standards and methodologies. Such methodologies are expected to, on the one hand to maintain compatibility among participating centres and, on the other, to save the costs each Government and/or centre will have to bear in developing such techniques on its own. I have for your perusal a worksheet developed at PADIS for purposes of classifying documents as well as information on African experts. Due to its bulky nature, it was not possible to provide on-site the frames developed to construct the statistical data bank.

Having said so much or perhaps so little on the system and network aspects. We should briefly examine the types of information services that are provided by the PADIS Central Coordination Office based on its computerized bibliographic files - publishing of bibliographies from items classified at the CCO and by national - level centres; question and answer or retrospective bibliographic search services; current awareness bulletins on materials produced by the ECA and by member states; and a pilot service, SDI service to about 100 individuals and institutions on its own data base and those it acquired from ILO,

UNIDO and FAO. Document delivery in both hard copy and microcopy formats is supported on all materials that have been input by the CCO or national centres. The CCO intermediates with FAO, UNIDO and ILO for any material cited in their respective data bases and which has been requested by a user.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognising the need to develop and strengthen the national information infrastructure before effectively participating in regional and international systems, and

Recognising the need for reliable, comprehensive and up to date information for the various groups in Swaziland.

It is recommended that :

1. A national library and information policy be formulated.
2. A central coordinating body be established to be responsible for the formulation of national library and information policy and legislation ensuring the enforcement of such policy and legislation, with the following functions:
 - (a) Advise government on matters relating to information systems in the country,
 - (b) Co-ordinate services of information centres in the country,
 - (c) Advise government on appropriate legislation relating to information work,
 - (d) Consider recommendations from the library association,
 - (e) Monitor the training of personnel so that training keeps abreast with changes in the information structure,
 - (f) Recommend the establishment of libraries and information centres where necessary,
 - (g) Co-ordinate and monitor the undertaking of necessary surveys,

- (h) And any other function related to library, information and documentation services.
3. Cooperation among libraries and information agencies be formalised on a national level.
 4. The importance of libraries and information/documentation centres be recognised and therefore that adequate human, financial, and physical resources be made available.
 5. Library and information/documentation centre plans be integrated into national development plans.
 6. The information profession be fully involved in the national development planning process.
 7.
 - (a) Training programmes at all levels be urgently established and developed, ensuring appropriate standards and moving away from traditional type librarianship and placing more emphasis on documentation and information curricula,
 - (b) A national library and information/documentation school be established, in particular aiming at sub-professional levels, and
 - (c) Library studies be included in teacher training programmes, and strengthened where they already exist.
 8. The librarianship and information science profession be accorded due recognition.
 9. The proportion of professionals against sub-professionals be appropriately increased in libraries and information centres.
 10. Publishers, including Government Ministries and Departments, be required to register their publications.

11. Government establish or strengthen Ministerial/Departmental libraries and information centres, with adequately trained manpower.
12. Librarians and information specialists develop information marketing strategies, in order to take a more active role in the dissemination of information, for example by establishing links with development sectors.

It is agreed that the Swaziland Library Association (SWALA) take all necessary follow up actions to pursue the implementation of these recommendations.

CLOSING REMARKS

by B. Nsibandze, Chairman, Civil Service Board.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Sponsors and Resource Persons, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to take this opportunity Mr. Chairman to state that it is my singular pleasure and privilege once again to be associated with this workshop which discusses and analyses the important subject of co-ordination and improvement of our national and regional information services, for the benefit of our planners, decision makers, as well as anybody interested in special fields of information.

I recall with special interest that in 1979 which is about seven years ago I was given an opportunity of making a few opening remarks to a similar distinguished gathering that had set itself to task of discussing the use of documentation and information for planning and decision making. It is quite possible that those who attended that seminar are present in this workshop and if this is the case the continuity and experience has been most vital in your deliberations over the last few days.

May I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the organizers of this workshop, and the sponsors, in particular the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), represented here by Mr. Hüttemann and Miss Reinartz as well as to our distinguished resource persons both from our sister SADCC countries and from our own university. To all of you Ladies and Gentlemen may I say that you deserve a special word of thanks for the valuable advice and material assistance that you have all given to make this workshop the success that it has been.

I am sure you all have had a very interesting and profitable time judging by the impressive list of resource persons and the subjects discussed. All too often workshops and seminars have been converted into talking shops where no concrete plan of action emerges, and where participants seem to enjoy their time - off from the rigours of their day to day duties as if to find a different refreshing change. This has been a most unfortunate experience of some workshops and I am confident that this workshop will not suffer such fate particularly that you have the benefit and experience of that seminar held in 1979 as well as some SADCC seminars that have been held within the last few years.

If my recollection serves well, one of the major recommendations of the 1979 seminar was the need for the formation of a "National Information Policy" which would be designed in accordance with the objectives and priorities of the National Economic Development Plan. I believe you have in some respects discussed these related issues at some length making an evaluation of progress made as well as future plans and proposals. It would be unfortunate if we were to spend time and money both of which are precious resources and produce elaborate reports and recommendation only for these to be shelved and forgotten and thereafter to start all over again over the same ground. This would be extremely disappointing particularly to our sponsors and our resource persons.

It is my hope that given your experience in this field, the continuity that you have, which is an added advantage, you have been consolidating on some of the proposals that were made and implemented over the last few years. It is of interest that this workshop in particular is designed inter-alia and to bring into focus the availability of well co-ordinated information service to decision makers primarily within each country and consequently within our region. To this end, I am confident that the last few days have produced the desired result and that you are now all eager to return to your work situation desirous to to institute improvements.

Developments in this modern day and age are such that governments and organisations everywhere are bursting out at the seams with information of all description which is not systematically kept, and consequently not readily available to those mostly in need of it i.e. policy and decision makers, administrators, professionals and casual observers who would all benefit from well stocked strategic sources of information. There is nothing so frustrating as to seek information, which you know exists and to find that you do not know where to get it, and if by chance you go to a source which you consider appropriate you find that there is no systematic storage and retrieval system that can make such information readily available.

In their day to day operations, governments and private organizations, if they are to operate efficiently have to produce masses and masses of documents and for this they have to have ready reference to information sources, and having produced such documents, they have to have a proper storage system coupled with a proper retrieval system to enable such information to be readily available for constant reference. All this has to be done within a relatively short period of time to enable important and urgent decisions to be made.

Other international organizations such as the entire United Nations System with its technical agencies throughout the world, the Commonwealth of Nations, Regional organizations such as SADCC and many other useful documents covering a wide range of technical/professional subjects providing all sorts of information which requires proper storage facilities.

In a number of cases time and money have been wasted by Governments and organizations conducting research programmes and undertaking elaborate studies when in fact the information being sought is already available, but lies hidden somewhere in some obscure private display cabinet either belonging to a Ministry or an individual who has no need for it. It is for this reason that arising from discussions in this workshop, the nation will expect positive steps towards the establishment of a national documentation centre.

I have noted with interest that your workshop programme has provided you with plenty of discussion time during which I am confident you have had the opportunity to consider the problems and issues involved, and how in this context, you can improve our own information network for present and future decision and policy makers, even for the ordinary layman who would like to widen his knowledge. It should be possible for our present network of libraries and documentation centres to assist information seekers as to where within their membership, people can get the type of information required as and when it is required.

It is remarkable how within the last two decades which spans the post-independence period, of most African countries, there has been such a phenomenal information explosion coupled with a corresponding interest by the public to avail themselves of such information. The public as you are all aware is thirsty for information to refresh their minds and for serious research programmes, scientific and technological information as well as information covering all fields of human endeavour. It is therefore my hope that you have positively responded to this challenge and that gradually we shall witness an improvement in the supply and availability of such information.

I am also confident that this workshop has identified those areas to which we have to pay particular attention. I have in mind the need and the importance of improving the calibre as well as the performance of personnel expected to run our information network. I am further confident that your discussions have aroused a special interest and awareness in the entire field of information services. I believe this interest will not end with the closing of this workshop, but will rub-off and have a positive impact to the Swazi Community and that ultimately we shall achieve our objective of having a Southern African Documentation and information system serving the SADCC countries.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen I do not intend to spend anymore of your time; having spent the last five days here. I do believe that our distinguished visitors have enjoyed their stay

here and that when they depart they shall carry with them fond memories of this occasion. It is now my pleasure therefore to declare the workshop officially closed.

I wish you all Good Luck!

ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

by L. Hüttemann

During an evaluation session at the end of the workshop participants and resource persons were given the possibility to express their views on an evaluation questionnaire, which was returned anonymously at the closure of the programme. 15 questionnaires were handed back by participants, another 7 by resource persons. The following analysis is based on this number of returns.

1. What did you expect to gain out of this workshop?

There were six pre-formulated answers; multiple answers were permitted.

8 participants stated: to prepare the coordination of a national information centre/service;

7 participants stated: to work more efficiently in my home institution;

4 participants stated different answers.

2 resource persons stated: to exchange ideas with other professionals in the field;

2 resource persons stated: to work more efficiently in my home institution;

3 resource persons stated different answers.

The results prove that the most important expectation of participants and resource persons alike was the achievement of greater efficiency in their daily work in their home institutions. Most of the participants wished to be involved in the future coordination of a national information service, whereas for the resource persons the exchange of ideas with other professionals had the highest relevance.

2. To what extent were your expectations fulfilled?

A ranking scale from 0 (= nil) to 5 (= completely) was used to classify the answers.

The average for the participants was 3,2, which means that the expectations were fulfilled between "above average" and "very high". The average for the resource persons was slightly lower at 3,0 which meant "above average".

3. To what extent do you think the knowledge gained during the workshop is applicable to your working situation?

The same ranking scale as for 2. was used.

The average for the participants was 3,1, whereas for resource persons it was 2,9. As this means the category "above average", it is most likely that the knowledge gained during the workshop was applicable to their respective working situation.

4. To what extent were the workshop objectives achieved?

The questionnaire contained 4 objectives (using the same ranking scale again):

- a) to improve the planning and decision making capability in national development authorities;
- b) to improve the supply of information to various user groups;
- c) to recommend measures concerning the establishment of a national information centre/service;
- d) to improve regional cooperation among I&D professionals.

The averages compiled from all answers were as follows:

	4a	4b	4c	4d
participants:	3,3	3,2	3,7	2,9
resource persons:	2,4	2,6	3,3	2,5

The above table shows that the participants were more optimistic than the resource persons regarding the achievement of the objectives of the workshops. Only objective c) got a significantly higher average than the others - it is probably easier to recommend something than to act in one's own capacity. In general, the averages still are in the middle of the ranking scale.

5. To what extent were you satisfied with the structure of the programme?

Once again the same ranking scale was used in the questionnaire. The results were:

participants: 3,7

resource persons: 3,1

The difference between the two groups indicate that resource persons tend to be more critical towards a programme structure than partici-

pants. In general, it must be said that the specific needs of the participants were considered throughout the programme.

6. Were you satisfied with the contents of the programme?

The preformed answer was a simple "yes" or "no".

All participants and resource persons stated "yes", which means that even if critics were expressed during the workshop or the evaluation all involved persons were in one way or another satisfied with what had been prepared by the organizers of the workshop.

7. Do you think the presentation of the lectures was good, just right or below level?

The analysis here concentrates on the answers of the participants only. There were 10 participants who considered the presentation of the lectures as "good" and 5 participants as "just right". Nobody had the feeling that any lecture was "below level". The answers prove that the resource persons had been well chosen by the organizers of the workshop.

The sessions the participants liked most were Paper IV "The user vis-a-vis the information purveyor" and Paper V "Application of theory to practice". It is no wonder that the practically oriented sessions received a higher approval by the participants than those being more theoretical. The most disliked session was the one on PADIS, but with only 2 of 15 nominations. 7 times the answer was: I liked all the sessions, I dislike none!

8. How was the quality of handouts, discussions, group work and field visits?

The questionnaire provided the categories "good", "just right" and "below level". Only the questionnaires returned by participants were considered during the analysis.

a) handouts: 10 participants stated "good", 5 "just right".

b) discussions: 7 participants stated "good", 5 "just right".

c) group work: 4 participants stated "good", 10 "just right".

d) field visits: 4 participants stated "good", 9 "just right".

One must explain that the group work was very demanding and that the fields visits were very tiring. This explains the answers partly. None of

the answers to any of the four items in question was "below level". This once again proves the quality of the workshop organization in general.

9. Of all sessions, which one would you personally have liked to spend more time on?

Only answers by participants have been analyzed.

The majority of the answers concentrated on 3 papers, namely Paper IV "The user vis-a-vis the information purveyor" with 4 nominations, Paper V "Application of theory to practice" with 3 nominations, and Paper VII "PADIS" with 2 nominations. 4 participants gave no answer at all. Once again it becomes evident that practically oriented papers are the ones being liked by participants!

10. To what extent were you satisfied with several organizational details of the workshops?

The following points had to be answered by using the same ranking scale as mentioned earlier in the questionnaire:

- a) communication about the workshop;
- b) travel arrangements;
- c) accomodation;
- d) food;
- e) secretarial facilities;
- f) time schedule.

The average compiled from the answers were:

	10a)	10b)	10c)	10d)	10e)	10f)
participants:	3,5	3,6	3,8	3,8	3,9	3,6
resource persons:	2,8	3,3	3,8	3,3	3,6	2,8

The views of the two groups differed significantly with regard to a) communication and f) time schedule. This can be explained by the fact that the local resource persons were informed at short notice and had to work also during all the sessions containing group work, which gave them a heavy work load. The rest of the answers are all between the categories "above average" and "very high", which shows that the organization of the workshop was highly appreciated by both the participants and the resource persons.

11. How do you think you can personally follow-up on this workshop?

The questionnaire provided 5 pre-formulated answers, of which one or more could be ticked.

The vast majority of the participants stated to follow-up "through contact and cooperation with fellow participants and their institutions", and "through further studies in the subjects tackled during the workshop" with 7 and 5 nominations respectively. Only 3 nominations stated "through implementation of knowledge acquired during the workshop at own workplace", which is in sharp contrast to question 1, where 7 participants had said that their expectations were "to work more efficiently in home institution" and to question 2, where they stated that the expectations were fulfilled "above average".

The resource persons also wished to follow-up "through contact and cooperation ..." with 6 nominations and "through further studies ..." with 3 nominations. Another 2 nominations were received for the answer "through reading handouts and final report".

It is interesting to note that only one participant and two resource persons stated that follow-ups be made "through information of fellow colleagues" - there is a tendency among professionals in this field not to share information with workmates as this could mean that the own career prospects are endangered.

12. Suggestions and Recommendations

This open question at the end of the questionnaire should allow better organization of future workshops of the same nature. The most relevant answers were:

- a) The target group (participants) should be determined better, and known to the resource persons.
- b) More time should be allowed for the preparation of papers.
- c) The programme should contain more practicals and demonstrations.
- d) There should be one free afternoon; time was too short; the workshops should happen more often.
- e) The programme content should be known by participants and resource persons in advance.

During this particular workshop the target group was determined by the local organizing institution. Only sub-professionals were selected. All local resource persons were highly qualified professionals. Therefore, there was a

tendency of shyness among the participants. In future, DSE will assist the local organizer in choosing the target group for similar workshops. - The other suggestions and recommendations are heard after almost any training programme of this kind: Participants must be made aware that the programme as such cannot replace formal training but only give incentives for future own work in the same field. Due to restrictions on the financial side the programmes must remain to be as short as possible. - DSE will try to implement the recommendations into future programmes.

ANNEX 1

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE IDRC/UNESCO/TLS CONFERENCE ON RESOURCE SHARING IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA, TANZANIA, DECEMBER 1985.

The meeting, having reviewed the existing situation regarding resource sharing in the countries of the region.

1. Recommended that:

Information resource sharing programmes should be encouraged among the information institutions (libraries, documentation centres, archives) at the national level and be extended later to a regional system amongst SADC countries.

2. The meeting further recommended to:

- 2.1. identify institutions which have the basic capacity, in terms of services provided and existing sharable information, to participate in resource sharing;
- 2.2. strengthen the capacities (holdings, tools, manpower) of these institutions to share resources;
- 2.3. develop basic resource sharing procedures or enhance existing procedures;
- 2.4. formulate formal national policies and plans regarding the extension of resource sharing to the national level;
- 2.5. adapt selected national resource sharing procedures to regional resource sharing activities.

PLAN OF ACTION

The Conference considered various possible actions to achieve the recommendations:

At the national level:

- 1.1. A comparative study should be carried out as soon as possible on the holdings, existing services, tools and manpower available in institutions with similar interests;

- 1.2. Negotiations should be initiated soon after with some pre-selected institutions concerning ways and means in **setting up resource sharing programmes**; this should be based on further identification and selection of sharable resources (holdings, equipment, tools services and manpower;
- 1.3. **Formalisation of existing "gentlemen's" agreements** should be carried out between the above institutions whenever applicable; with due regard to the distribution of responsibilities;
- 1.4. **Securing adequate financial aid** (local or foreign) and manpower support by the participating institutions
- 2.1. Initiate the **updating or development of reference materials** such as national or special bibliographies, union lists, union catalogues, indexes, abstracts and directories;
- 2.2 Search for ways and means of **improving the comprehensiveness of national collections** through acquisition of published material and important "grey literature";
- 2.3. Formulate and enforce the **legal deposit legislation** regarding national collections;
- 2.4. Search for ways and means of acquiring **appropriate technology** and mechanised means of processing information (photocopying machines, microfiche readers, microfilming, microcomputers, etc.);
- 2.5. Tailor **training programmes** to the local needs with due regard given to their equivalency (standards) and unnecessary proliferation;
- 2.6. Seek ways of promoting the **exchange of personnel**, in particular through participation in exchange training programmes and use of consultants from within the local pool of expertise.

- 3.1. Improve access to the information contained in directories of resources and access to the bibliographic records of the holdings of the institutions concerned;
 - 3.2. Develop written acquisition policies to reduce unintended duplication;
 - 3.3. Develop means of delivering required materials to member institutions, with minimum delays, in particular through inter library lending, and with an agreed code of practice;
 - 3.4. Establish compatible resource sharing procedures and methods;
 - 3.5. Develop ways and means of mutual utilization of existing and/or newly acquired appropriate technology.
- 4.1. Study ways of selecting and improving communication links between information institutions and libraries within the country;
 - 4.2. Secure commitment of professionals and government officials in the promotion of an integrated library policy;
 - (i) to prepare, coordinate and implement development plans for all types of library and information services.
 - (ii) to cost such plans and include them in national development plans.
 - (iii) to harmonize the allocation of all resources for library development, both from internal and external sources; and
 - (iv) to establish national standards for efficient operation of library and information services.
 - (v) to develop a unified scheme of service and a common salary structure for the profession and to prepare in consultation with established schools of librarianship the necessary manpower plans.
 - 4.3. Set up national coordinating machinery whose responsibilities will include, among others,

- (i) to create an **awareness** of existing publications and documents in the country, and
 - (ii) **distribution** of publications and documents to institutions throughout the country;
- 4.4. Reinforce the **administrative structure** (national Library services, library boards, or any other central or local authority, etc.).

At the Regional level:

- 5.1. (i) Efforts should be made to **develop resource sharing in the SADCC region** and gradually reduce reliance on Pretoria.
- (ii) **Links** should be established **between national Associations.**

At the International level:

- 6.1 Secure ways of acquiring more **comprehensive collections of publications and documents** from overseas agencies in particular through formal exchange programs, or from international or national donor agencies;

ANNEX 2

PROGRAMME

i. **Monday - 24th February, 1986.**

09.00 - 12.30

- (a) Registration of participants
- (b) Introduction to the Workshop. B.J.K.Kingsley.
- (c) Address by DSE representative, Mr. L. Huettemann.
- (d) Keynote Address by Principal Secretary, Education.
- (e) Election of Workshop Chairperson and Rapporteurs.
- (f) Announcements.

12.30 - 14.00 : Lunch

Afternoon Session:

14.00 - 15.30 : Paper/discussion

Topic of Paper I: An overview of the supply of
information in Swaziland.

Resource Person/Discussant : Mrs. E. Wamala

15.30 - 15.45 : Tea Break

15.45 - 17.00 : Working groups discussion

ii. **Tuesday: 25th February, 1986**

Morning Session.

09.00 - 10.30 : Paper/Discussion

Topic of Paper II: "The place of a national
documentation centre in the supply of
information : problems and prospects".

Resource Person/Discussant : Mrs. M. Nhlapo

10.30 - 11.00 : Coffee Break

11.00 - 12.30 : Paper/Discussion

Topic of Paper III: "The concept of co-operation in
information services: national,
regional, international".

Resource Person/Discussant : Ms. Z. Ngcobo

12.30 - 14.00 : Lunch

Afternoon Session.

14.00 - 15.30 Paper/Discussion

Topic of Paper IV: "The user vis-as-vis the
information purveyor".

Resource Person/Discussant : Dr. E. Kuangamno

15.30 - 15.45 : Tea break

15.45 - 17.00 : Working groups discussion

17.00 - 17.45 : Presentations of external participants

iii. Wednesday, 26th February, 1986

Morning Session

09.00 - 10.30: Paper/discussion

Topic of Paper V: "Application of theory to
practice".

Resource Person/Discussant : Mrs. S. Monageng

10.30 - 11.00: Coffee break

11.00 - 18.00: VISITS

iv. Thursday, 27th February, 1986

Morning Session

09.00 - 10.30 Paper/Discussion

Topic of Paper VI: "The role of a national
information service for socio-economic
and cultural development."

Resource Person/Discussant : Ms. N. Longwe

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30 PADIS : Mr. D. Abate

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 15.30 Working groups discussion.

15.30 - 15.45 Tea Break

15.45 - 17.00 Working groups draft resolutions.

18.00 - 20.00 Cocktail Party by Ministry of Education.

v. Friday, 28th February, 1986

Morning Session

09.00 - 10.30: Meeting of Resolutions Committee.

10.30 - 11.00: Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30: Resolutions and Recommendations

12.30 - 14.00: Lunch

Afternoon Session

14.00 - 15.30: Workshop Evaluation

15.30 - 15.45: Tea Break

15.45 - : Closing Ceremony

(a) Closing Remarks

(b) Closing Speech : Mr. B.Nsibandze
Chairman, Civil Service Board.

ANNEX 3

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Part B

The Maseru Workshop

This part of the publication does not contain the papers of
Mr. D. Abate and Dr. E.E. Kaungamno.
Kindly confer Part A of this document.

OPENING SPEECH

by Mr. Tihedi, Minister of Education

His Excellency, The German Ambassador, DSE Head of I&D Training Section, Mr. Hüttemann, The Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the National University of Lesotho, Principal Secretaries of the Government of Lesotho or their representatives, Chairman of the Lesotho Library Association, official delegates and observers.

It gives me immense pleasure to officially open this Workshop on "Coordination of Information Services in Lesotho", which is sponsored principally by the German Foundation for International Development (DSE).

Although this is the first workshop that DSE has brought to Lesotho, this organisation has for a long time been sponsoring our librarians to attend workshops, conferences, seminars etc., in different parts of Africa and abroad. DSE has awarded about 30 sponsorships to Basotho librarians between the years 1976 and 1986. DSE is about one arm of assistance that our country is benefitting from Germany. The German Government is actively involved in the training of technicians both at LTI and in Germany. Recently the German Embassy in Maseru has made a substantial financial contribution towards the rebuilding of our hospital in Leribe which was damaged by fire. They have also contributed 4 sanitation vehicles to help in the removal of night-soil and sewerage to improve health conditions in Lesotho. We are really grateful at this abundant generosity.

The theme of this workshop is very important since its aim is to bring to the attention of everybody present here, the need for coordinating information services in Lesotho, and eventually with other sister countries. The advantages of such an undertaking are obvious, cooperation within the respective libraries and their staff, no duplication of effort thereby saving our scarce resources which could then be employed elsewhere.

The commitment of each information service is immense. It is among other things to establish an awareness about the role which information can play in

wiping out ignorance, illiteracy etc. thus bringing a new era of change and national development.

In most Third World countries, Lesotho included, a great majority of our people may never step inside a library, let alone read for personal advancement or for pleasure. Reading is mostly done by students and only to attain degrees and diplomas. Once this is achieved, they forget all about books.

Research shows that people who had attained a basic education but cease to make use of their basic skills of reading and writing retrogress to a point where after a few years, they find it impossible to practise those limited skills which they once possessed.

It is my Government's hope that everybody attending this workshop will have gained something by the end of it, not only the librarians, but Government officials, decision-makers, in fact every participant because we all of us need information to make wise decisions in our respective fields.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these few words I declare the workshop officially opened.

Thank you.

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THE FIELD OF
INFORMATION SUPPLY ON A NATIONAL SCALE

by M.M. Lebotsa

INTRODUCTION

It is becoming increasingly popular to ask those attending conferences and workshops to make an exposition of library and information services in their countries. What are usually called country reports are often followed in subsequent years by country progress reports, meaning that the reporter should only highlight progress made in the last one or two years as required.

Since I first wrote a country report in 1977, it has been a task I have never really enjoyed, primarily because I have often found that Lesotho compares rather unfavourably with other countries in the sub-region. However, I must say how delighted I am today, that for the first time I have the opportunity to address people who matter, in the sense that they are involved in the making of national plans and decisions for Lesotho. I have a firm hope that my lamentations about poor conditions of libraries in this country, and the unsatisfactory flow of information to all sections of the population, will not fall on deaf ears, but that they will have an impact on future attitudes and national information plans.

I shall now proceed to discuss national information supply under the main library and information centres, by type; and I invite all listeners to make their own assessment of each unit's information supply role, as well as capabilities in national, regional and sub-regional cooperation, a theme for which we are gathered here today. I shall use the word 'Libraries' in a generic sense to mean libraries, archives, museums and documentation centres.

1. THE LESOTHO NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE'S: Role in public and school library systems.

The National Library Service came into being in 1976, as a project inaugurated under the British Government Aid Scheme, administered by the British Council in Maseru. The underlying objective of service was the enrichment of the general education policy through a book service in order to foster and maintain the public's reading habits. It was hoped that the initial phase of providing a public library to all the large towns and Headquarters in Maseru, would result in the spread of a public library system to all the large towns of Lesotho including an intensive service to schools at all levels. Lofty ideas characterized the early years of this institution.

The following objectives were initially set for the Lesotho National Library Service:

- a) To support the educational system in promoting reading habits.
- b) To support literacy at all levels with special emphasis on non-formal education.
- c) Provision of information for decision-makers at all levels.

These objectives were to be provided through legislation or the creation of regulations for the running of a national library service, to include inter alia:

- a) A national Bibliographic Center to collect, record, store, and safeguard books and other information resources, produced in Lesotho and/or about Lesotho.
- b) Creation of a network of public library system.
- c) Creation of a nationwide schools' library service, for all schools in the country.
- d) Creation of an office which in collaboration with other interested bodies (authors, publishers, printers), would support the editing and distribution of printed matter in Sesotho for both young and old.

The most important elements of the development plan of the LNLS were:

- i. The provision of basic bookstock as a nucleus of a public library service for Maseru, the capital;
- ii. Two mobile book units;
- iii. The opening of 8 district library centres;
- iv. Operating a book distribution service to schools.

In the beginning, the library had a sizeable collection of books for both children and adults; two vehicles to operate a mobile service to outlying villages were donated by the British Government in 1979, but the mobile service collapsed when the vehicles broke down in late 1980. The vehicles are still grounded because there are no funds to repair them. The library has as a result continued to serve only the residents and schools in the city of Maseru. The plan to open 8 district library centres did not materialise; only two branch libraries in Ilhotse and Mafeteng were opened, however they operate under very difficult conditions and the service they offer is limited and inadequate.

It had been planned to give the library a legal basis through the promulgation of a National Library Act, but nothing has come out of the draft law which the then Director of LNLS drew up for the guidance of the government. In subsequent years the Lesotho Library Association made an effort to have the law of Legal Deposit passed, which would give the LNLS a basis for its bibliographic activities, but this has not materialised.

It is a well-known fact that adequate staff is the basis for an effective service. The staff projections made in 1977, indicated that in a five year period, it was expected to have a total of thirteen trained staff, but as of now there is only one graduate librarian, four previous ones having left, and about 6 paraprofessional staff. Staff depletion is very acute, especially at the graduate level, but it is discernible at other levels as well. The status accorded the chief librarian in the national library in Lesotho is relatively low, compared to that of heads of national libraries in other African Countries. Financial provision to cover operations is very inadequate. Conditions generally are not satisfactory.

The reasons for the failure of the enthusiastic start of the early years, is not hard to find. It does appear that when the British project ended in 1979, preparations for the Lesotho Government take-over had not been

adequate or made altogether; thus arose the problems and failures outlined above.

Because of the absence of legal instruments such as copyright law, legal deposit law and National Library Law in general, the LNLS is hindered in its effective control of Lesotho publications, and has no adequate means of informing the national and foreign institutions about Lesotho's publishing output. It has a Lesotho collection which due to lack of effective control, is not very comprehensive.

The above-mentioned constraints prevent the Lesotho National Library Service from being an effective instrument of library development and information provision in the country and it is unable to assume the position of leadership in information affairs that is rightly its own.

2. THE GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES: Its role in administrative and research information.

The Government Archives was established in 1957. As the name indicates, it is comprised solely of documents emanating from the various government departments of the central administration. Records date from 1871, when the first British Governor arrived in Lesotho.

The earliest correspondence was kept in large letterbooks with no subject arrangement at all. It is only careful indexing which can make the information in these letterbooks easy. Subject filing was only introduced during the last decade of the nineteenth century. The date of the youngest records in the archives is 1933.

The Government Archives was intended primarily to serve as a repository for official information, which, organized and systematically arranged would make retrieval easy for reference when major administrative issues are considered. It was also intended to preserve information for historical and other types of research. It was intended to maintain a continuous flow of records from all offices of the government into the Archives, so that while space is cleared for more pressing needs in offices, a place is available for their safe keeping.

The first major task of collecting together official records, organizing, classifying, and arranging them on the shelves, seem to have been the first and last major undertaking for a number of years since the Government Archives was set up. In those formative years a sheath catalogue of all the holdings of the archives was compiled. A name and subject index were produced. These two tools have made it relatively easy to retrieve materials.

In its supply of information to the public, the archives is faced with a number of problems.

i) Physical:

From the time it was set up, the government archives has undergone no physical expansion, therefore no additional records could be added. It remained a oneman department for nineteen years, but recently the staff has been increased to four. Until 1982 when the University Library offered it shelter in its basement floor, 35 kilometres from where it had remained for twenty-five years, the archives were very poorly accommodated in an old building that says everything against all the principles of the physical defence of archives.

The provision of 60.000 Maloti for the construction of an archives building has featured in two successive national development plans, and also disappeared without anything being achieved. This has greatly demoralised the staff, who know that they are at the university for only a limited period. No action has yet been taken on the Unesco report recommendations on the Archives, which was prepared by one J. Ede of U.K.

ii) Organizational

An archives repository is to be found in the Capital only. In all other nine districts, no regional or district record offices exist, either for the purpose of collecting old and closed district files for onward transmission to the Headquarter office, or for the channelling of enquiries to and from the main office in Maseru. Archival information flow is thus very limited. Even at the University where the Archives are presently housed, information is not easily available from the Archives for a number of reasons.

3. THE LESOTHO NATIONAL MUSEUM: Its role in information supply.

The National Museum was conceived when Lesotho gained independence in 1966. In 1973 the actual construction of a museum which was to be built in three phases, was begun. The first and second phases were completed by the end of 1975. Although the 2nd 5 year Development Plan stated that:

"Work has already commenced on the construction of a national museum but a further R90,000 is required to complete the building. A curator has already been secured for the institute so that operations can begin as soon as the building is finished." (v.2, p.125)

in 1980 when the third stage of the museum project was contemplated the building was demolished to clear ground for new government offices. Physically speaking therefore, there is no museum.

After the demolition, the museum moved to a small office with an area of 18 sq. metres, which is part of an old dwelling house. The walls are cracky, and ventilation very poor. The artefacts which were rescued from the demolished museum building are stored in a passage with no security at all. They are exposed to dust, and possible theft and damage. Some of the storage cases were lost through moving whilst others are in this or that place because of absence of space. Although a new site has been identified for the construction of a museum, there is no money available yet to develop it. Recently two Unesco Experts visited Lesotho with the purpose of looking into the possibility of a new museum and drawing up a programme for the training of the museum staff.

When it started in 1973, the museum had only one trained curator. After his death in 1978, a succession of untrained curators were employed. This year however, one curator has been trained. The total number of staff at the museum is three including a typist.

The museum is not yet efficiently organized to disseminate information. There are no museum centres in the districts, and museum education has not yet penetrated in minds of Basotho, particularly schools which, for educational reasons, could collect a lot of museum specimens in support of the national museum. Only one or two private museum collections are known to exist.

The physical absence of the national museum militates against its effort to disseminate museum information which is so vital in research.

4. INSTITUT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDIES (ISAS) DOCUMENTATION CENTRE.

This Documentation Centre which came into existence in 1982, is attached to the Institute of Southern African Studies of the National University of Lesotho. Its area of interest, is what is called grey literature - those single to several pages long publications typed, printed or mimeographed - that are often dismissed as ephemeral and of limited interest. This is the type of literature that the nation loses so easily and so quickly; but which is of immense value to researchers. The Institut itself is there to stimulate, guide and assist researchers.

In addition to grey literature, the documentation centre also looks after documents and publications of the Institute. A lot of ground has been covered since its inception. Two of the publications originated by the Centre comprise Lesothana, which is an annotated bibliography of newly acquired materials; Lesotho Clippings consisting of news articles clipped from newspapers, mounted on A4 paper, photocopied and bound into volumes.

The centre has vision but sadly lacks staff. For this reason, materials processing is unnecessarily delayed. Despite lack of suitable technology, the centre is research-oriented as it is attached to a research institute. Most of its activities however overlap with those of the university library which established an archives section in 1980.

5. THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO LIBRARY: Supply of Teaching, Learning and Research Information

The National University of Lesotho is the only University in the country, having started in 1945 as Pius XII College under the University of South Africa. It attained University status in 1964 when it became the University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland (UBBS), and after the independence of the three countries in 1966, it became known as the University of

Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS). In October 1975, Lesotho withdrew from the federal university and set up its own National University of Lesotho (NUL). The library is as old as the University itself.

The library caters for the needs of the university community, full-time and part-time students and staff. It is a consolidated collection, with no departmental libraries. Because of the absence of public library facilities in the country, the library offers its service to extra-mural readers undertaking private and correspondence studies.

The National University of Lesotho Library, for a long time assumed a leading role in professional matters before either the National Library or the Lesotho Library Association came into existence. It brought librarians in Lesotho in close contact with librarians of other nationalities and regions through affiliated membership to such international professional associations as COMLA, IFLA and the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Librarians (SCECSAL). It is the first library in Lesotho to become a member of the South African Interlibrary Loan Scheme whose clearing house is the State Library in Pretoria. Under this scheme, it contributes to the Union Catalogue of South African Libraries, in return for a microfiche catalogue of monographs and a union list of periodicals; the latter is issued in a publication called PISAL (Periodicals in South African Libraries). It has exchange arrangements with foreign libraries and institutions, notable among which are the two American universities of Princeton and Rice.

In 1979, the library was extended to accommodate facilities for research and audio-visual collection. In 1978, a branch library was opened in Maseru to cater for the needs of part-time students and lecturers.

The University Library has an approved establishment of fourteen professional posts, including the University Archivist whose activities are based in the library. One professional post has been seconded to the Bookshop which, administratively is also under the library.

The library issues on a regular basis, accessions lists of recently acquired and processed materials.

6. GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARIES AS INFORMATION CENTRES OF MINISTRIES

A survey is presently in progress to establish the number and state of libraries attached to ministries. It is known so far that most ministries have collections of some kind. Some are rich, others poor.

The most unfortunate feature of departmental/ministerial libraries is that they have no formally trained staff. Looking after a library in a government departmental library is still considered no different from other clerical chores. No skill is expected at all by most departments to do this work. The needs for a qualified librarian or information specialist who can compile reader profiles and establish an information service to cater for the needs of individual officers, is not yet felt, and yet such a person could do very useful work by bringing relevant information to the desks of decision-makers as and when required. Only one ministry (apart from Agricultural Research Station) is known to have sent its library charge for a short-term attachment overseas to study documentation methods, and that is the ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Each Departmental/Ministerial Library should in essence become the authority in all publications emanating from it or written on it. It is common to find that a ministry has no complete set of its annual reports. It has no idea at all where to find its own technical reports and other reports written by special missions or external experts. This goes to show how indifferent some ministries are about information. Loss of such vital information is bound to result in haphazard planning and non-implementation of useful recommendations which are often contained in such report literature. If libraries were taken seriously as the information centres that they ought to be, every printed, typed or mimeographed publication that reaches a ministry/department, ought immediately find its way to the library where it can be read by all officers including researchers. Publications should not be left in files, or office cupboards, as this is the surest way of losing them. It is often embarrassing to find that overseas libraries have the most significant and the most obscure reports on our countries, which cannot be found anywhere in the country no matter how thorough the search. We are in an information age where every sentence written or uttered is significant in understanding events, and developments in any nation. I therefore wish to take this oppor-

tunity to urge all ministries to value their information, to train personnel to look after it, and to use it in plans and decisions.

7. THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH STATION LIBRARY: Supply of Agricultural Information

This library took over what used to be called the LASA collection, a collection that was begun by a team of Americans from the United States, a few years ago. It is very research oriented and is a member of the AGRIS and CARIS systems. Were it not for its serious staffing problems, it is one of the libraries in Lesotho most likely to make a major contribution to cooperative efforts both nationally and regionally. The Research Station Library's efforts to collect, organize and disseminate agricultural information, is effectively supplemented by the Agricultural Information Library which has no international obligations like its sister library, but devotes itself to the dissemination of agricultural information to the public through pamphlets, hand-out leaflets and through radio broadcasts. Daily radio broadcasts enable agricultural information to reach a large portion of the population.

8. SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE

The report of a Unesco consultant, L. McGrath, who visited Lesotho in February 1978, revealed that the school library service generally is far from being satisfactory. Most schools, he discovered, have some space for a library collection, the size and quality of which vary vastly from school to school. Most collections in the schools do not supply the information required because the teachers do not select the books for the libraries themselves, but depend on gifts and donations from various sources. Under the LNLS book distribution service, however teachers participate in selecting books for their schools. The service thus ensures equitable distribution of materials and a uniform quality.

Unfortunately there is no adequate provision of funds for the purchase of library materials, and the freedom of selection is in some way limited. The most common inadequacy in school libraries is lack of proper accommodation, lack of trained staff, the failure of most schools to integrate the library into

the total school programme. The concept of recourse - based learning is not yet known principally because the current curricular do not make provision for its application. No efforts have as yet been made to implement the McGrath report even if partially.

It is still a surprising fact that library provision as a government policy starts only at post-primary. No provision is made whatsoever in primary schools. Primary English-medium schools invariably have libraries and these are often, if not always, private schools.

9. AUTHORSHIP AND PUBLISHING IN LESOTHO

Now that the major information centres have been covered I need to say a word or two on authorship and publishing which are the major sources of information.

Publishing is mainly in the hands of missions - the Roman Catholic Mission in Maseru and the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Maseru. Publishing is confined mainly to educational and religious books in Sesotho and English, linguistic and historical books and novels. Publishing in other African languages has been undertaken, but not for the local market.

These publishers also operate as printers, bookbinders and booksellers. The Government printer is responsible for all government publications. The National University of Lesotho has no printing press of its own, but runs a small printing unit which serves the administrative needs of the university and its teaching departments. Efforts are presently being made to upgrade the printing unit into a university press to meet the needs of the proposed university publishing house. Learned societies such as the Sesotho Academy, The English Society of NUL, The Lesotho Library Association and the deceased Lesotho Scientific Association, are/were known to publish on a regular or irregular basis. One Mosotho author, Mr Patric Bereng, is his own publisher and bookseller.

The publishing houses themselves, and with the help of renowned national authors, decide what will be published. Most manuscripts by local authors are novels and dramas in the local language. A wealth of these unpublished

manuscripts are still lying in the publishing houses, with little prospects of their ever being published in the future. So 90% of the publishing effort is confined to reprints of religious and school books whose market is certain. Publishers are reluctant to risk publishing manuscripts which may bring them little or no profit at all. The result is that newer potential authors remain buried in the debris of publishing economics. Unless the government is prepared to assist publishers financially and thus diminish the risks naturally associated with their business, this will remain forever the case.

A great deal of dissatisfaction also exists among established authors on the question of royalties. Many of them already see authorship as an unrewarding venture. There are authors who would rather send their manuscripts to South Africa or Britain for publishing than give them to local publishers, particularly where they feel that their works may appeal to foreign markets. The Sesotho language is also falling into disuse and misuse among the younger generation; but English, to which they are more favourably inclined, fails to reach a sufficiently high standard to enable the rise of a sizeable group of authors in English. Schools are no longer the breeding place for writers. Sesotho literature is passing through an era of darkness, all talent seems asleep. The majority of Authors who are writing today, are the same authors who were writing in the 1940s and 1950s. The writing of textbooks by local authors has not generally been undertaken, and with the exception of only two or three authors, authorship is confined mainly to Sesotho novels and dramas.

CONCLUSION

Despite a supposedly high rate of literacy, (above 60%), the Basotho generally do not read books for pleasure and for the stimulation of the mind. Their reading habits are almost entirely confined to Sunday missals, hymnals and the bible (for practising Christians); and to reading and writing letters. Newspapers are widely read in towns, both foreign and local; however poor communications make it difficult for these papers, especially foreign ones, to reach remote areas on a regular basis. It is not uncommon therefore to find literate people lapsing into illiteracy. A literacy campaign is one of the items of national development programmes.

Community information centres having all the information that the government wishes people to acquire - such as health education, legal notices, education on legal rights and obligations etc. - should be established throughout the land in order to produce a more informed society. "Information for all" is the motto of today. Information is a right and not a privilege, for this reason information supply ought to feature more prominently in national development plans and not be treated in three or four lines as is done today.

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IDENTIFICATION OF AN INSTITUTION IN LESOTHO WHICH
COULD PLAY THE ROLE OF A NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

by R.J. Kukubo

INTRODUCTION

The reference to literacy is relevant, if we accept the notion that development is about people and their contribution to the development and understanding of their environment. In order for people to develop themselves, they must be able to understand the dynamics of environmental changes brought about by the impact of science and technology, which can only be achieved if people know how to read and write in order to take advantage of the available literature in printed media. Knowing how to read and write is not per se economically profitable. The knowledge acquired and the literacy skills possessed must be of a functional nature.

According to the 1976 Population Census "about 36% and 60% respectively of males and females aged ten years and over had at least four years of schooling and thus met Unesco's definition of literacy".¹⁾ It is evident that the female population of Lesotho is better educated or more literate than their male counterparts - a fact which is contrary to what obtains in most developing countries in Africa.

However it has been generally acknowledged that during colonial period "Education, supported by missionary groups, was designed to produce a degree of literacy conducive to christianization and to provide a modest number of middle level bureaucrats for the colonial administration."²⁾

Despite Lesotho's wide variety of socio-economic and geo-political problems stemming from its position within Apartheid South Africa, since achieving independence in 1966 Lesotho has managed to plan and develop its educational system quite remarkably. Some of these educational institutions existed prior to independence but others were established in response to the needs either expressed at independence or soon thereafter.

Various Government and other programmes have resulted in the generation and accumulation of vital information of one kind or another. And in order to implement government priority programmes, planning based on correct information becomes a crucial factor in Lesotho's economic development.

Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa are members of the Customs Union. Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa are members of the Rand Monetary Authority. All communication to and from outside Lesotho goes through South Africa. All major educational materials are procured from or through South Africa. The implications of Lesotho's dependence on South Africa have been ably covered by economists, political scientists, historians, etc. that we need not go over this exercise again.

It will suffice to stress that this dependence in the field of information has to a certain extent been analysed by the late Professor SIA Kotel.³⁾ Kotel reached the conclusion that the BLS countries cannot develop their information capacities in the face of overt censorship in South Africa.

In this paper we seek to show, given the foregoing and other constraints which will be identified in the course of developing our theme, firstly that the formulation of Lesotho's economic policy and national development plans has depended on and will continue to depend on the utilization of accumulated knowledge, as well on the availability of up-to-date basic data which will help the planners and implementers in gauging the parameters of the country's development and the sustenance of flexibility in planning programmes.

Underlying this assumption is the fact that the accumulated knowledge and current information are well organized, properly stored, correctly documented and easily retrievable for use. This in turn would assume that there exist well planned, equipped and managed institutions whose responsibility is to oversee the systematic "hunting and gathering" of this knowledge and information.

In the second stage, the paper addresses itself to the identification of an institution in Lesotho which could be responsible for either documenting or coordinating the nation's information resources essential for development planning.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION AWARENESS IN AFRICA

Unesco's NATIS document has underlined the importance of information for national planning and development in a more vivid manner as follows:

"The task NATIS is to ensure that all engaged in political, economic, scientific, educational, social or cultural activities received the necessary information enabling them to render their fullest contribution to the whole community."⁴⁾

The road which led to crystallization of NATIS concept has been long and tortuous. In what follows we briefly describe the evolution of this concept and see how far it has been translated into working model in Lesotho.

In 1949 an International Conference on Science Abstracting (the forerunner of the present UNISIST programme) was convened in Paris. This Conference stressed the importance of governments to be involved in information policy and planning. By this time the industrialized colonial powers' immediate concern was how to rehabilitate their economies which had been shattered by the Second World War. This concern was of very little significance to Lesotho and other British Colonial possessions as these were still under the iron hand of a nursing colonial power.

This Conference was immediately followed by another International Conference on the Improvement of Bibliographical Services which was held at Paris in 1950. Its principal aim was "establishing the nature and scope of national bibliography and its international coordination."⁵⁾

Underpinning this rationale was the necessity to establish National Bibliographical Centres as well as ensuring that at international level coordination of national groups and international agencies was to be achieved through the present International Advisory Committee on Documentation, Libraries and Archives (since 1967 the successor to IACB).⁶⁾

Between 1950 and 1961 rapid development was recorded in the rehabilitation of the economies which had been shattered during the war. This period also witnessed the emergence of African states from colonial domination. Starting

in 1960 the UN First Development Decade was launched, which laid emphasis on the "... building up of regular administrative services of government as well as the construction of educational and training institutions", particularly in the newly independent states of Africa.

Besides, many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America achieving independence, other developments took place simultaneously. Starting in 1950 Unesco has played a leading role in assisting member-states to plan and create documentation centres. Among the earliest are the Mexican Centre meant to serve the needs of all the Latin American countries. The Indian Centre (INSDOC) in New Delhi was established in 1952 and in 1954 the National Centre in Cairo was founded.

These centres were initially intended to serve as Regional Centres. But like any other regional venture they were behoved by political problems coupled with national selfishness as well as internal squabbles. Thus Unesco's good intentions were swept under the carpet.

Another problem was the concept of what, in the opinion of the proponents of technical assistance, projects directly contributed to a country's development. The pure and applied sciences were accorded high priority but the social sciences and the humanities were thus not priority areas in the opinion of technical aid providers. As would be expected

"Developing countries were ... concerned with prestige, and attraction of large grants, than honouring a lasting commitment to build up their library and information services."⁷⁾

It is not surprising therefore that early documentation and information centres as well as provision of library and archives infrastructure in developing countries performed miserably. Discouraged by this performance "Unesco ... moved away from providing teams to establish centres and concentrated more on evaluation of needs and as a guide to national planning."⁸⁾

This policy of disengagement resulted in consultancy missions to individual countries to report on specific plans for national needs.

Unesco envisioned Libraries as free and universal enterprises which changed from time to time to accommodate changes that are occasioned by not only socio-economic and educational needs of each country but also science and technology. Although for newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, owing to constraints brought about by transformation from colonialism to national statehood the politicians' emphasis shifted from developing libraries and information services to those areas which had formed a package deal for the struggle for independence.⁹⁾ Such areas as education, health and sanitation, employment, etc. took priority over libraries and archives.

However, the period starting from mid 1960s witnessed a reawakening in most countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America as Unesco intensified its activities in sensitizing governments towards according recognition to Libraries, Archives and documentation services. This period was characterized by several conferences at which librarians from the Third World focused their attention on the plight of information services in their respective countries.

This awareness was partly as a result of adverse World Bank reports on the state of information in all the Third World countries.

It was not only the World Bank which commented adversely on the paucity of information services in the Third World. The Third World countries themselves acknowledged this shortcoming. At the time when Lesotho achieved independence, for example, it was realized that the African government could no longer pursue similar policies like the ex-colonial administration. The country's economic development had to be restructured and systematized along new national concepts and African political philosophy. In this approach one problem area which confronted the new economic planners and administrators was that "... the statistical data available is too sketchy and reliable to make possible the setting of targets for saving."¹⁰⁾ This shortcoming, it was acknowledged, could only be retrieved as and when "better statistical data becoming available."¹¹⁾

Once exposed to these criticisms "... the relevance of information at all levels to economic development was beginning to penetrate into the official and political hierarchies"¹²⁾ of the Third World countries.

Value of Information for Development Planning

In 1965, one year before Lesotho became independent, Albert Waterston reviewed the World Bank comments on the state of information, particularly in the less developed countries in the 1950s and 1960s and reached the conclusion that "All countries need basic resource information to plan effectively."¹³⁾ Professor Albert Waterston reached this conclusion because of the paucity of information essential for development planning, particularly in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America which were by then either emerging from colonial rule or struggling to consolidate their national sovereignty.

Jumba Mazaggazi has tried to negate the false notion that the information sector did not materially contribute to a country's development:

"It is not correct to look (at) development in a country only through the eyes of the products and raising standards of living without scrutinizing the entire machinery that contributes to that development."¹⁴⁾

Underlying his thesis is the rubric of institutions which are called into play and whose activities thus determine the rate at which a country develops. Jumba Mazaggazi looks at a country's development in the context of various inputs which include information, finances, machinery, labour, capital, etc. and the various agencies which are charged with the task of producing, processing disseminating and utilization of these inputs. Professor Richard L. Meier, on the other hand, views the whole phenomenon of development as transcending, the entire spectrum of society - from the family unit to the more complex bureaucracies. As he has pointed out:

"In the course of social development a great many important new organizational roles are created outside in the family. If these organizational roles are to be filled, people must learn to carry out explicit tasks. The more information a person has at his disposal, the more likely he is to perform these tasks competently. By so doing he would meet the expectations of others and obtain their approval."¹⁵⁾

One area of development which is crucial to a country's transformation is the administration. It is this agency-perpetual in existence - that in the final

analysis sets the stage and through its activities determines the rate at which the country's natural resources will be utilised for national development. This would presuppose, according to Meier, that

"Before these bureaucracies can function and provide their designated services, they need quite a large numbers of educated persons to fill the respective position. They need modern media of communication, such as a postal service, a telephone system, news publications, and banking services. Thus administrative development demands an accelerated building of communications through the educational system, as well as a set of public carriers with very enlarged capacities."¹⁶⁾

In the Kingdom of Lesotho, when one looks around one sees vast strides in development, particularly in communication and industrialisation infrastructures. The only plausible conclusion one is tempted to arrive at is that bureaucrats-planners and implementers of development plans are seized with the correct information. It would be a worthwhile research exercise if one examined in detail the correlation between Lesotho's economic performance in the recent past and the utilization of the accumulated knowledge in effecting this performance. However that it has taken Lesotho a very long time to achieve what it has superficially attained is evident that during colonial days 1868-1966 the colonial administration neither made proper use of the available information nor created necessary organizational roles and trained people to execute explicit tasks associated with development. Meier has acknowledged that under such circumstances "development cannot be achieved over the long run without very substantial increases in communications flow and large-scale accumulations of knowledge, both in people's heads and in collection of book and files."¹⁷⁾ This is an admission that information as a part of national development must be properly organized. It is not sufficient to have people with vast amounts of knowledge tucked away in their mortal heads. This information must not only be reduced to some recognizable format but be seen to be put to some functional use. Secondly systems incharge of production and accumulation of books and documents manifesting or documenting a country's socio-economic development (in its broadest sense) be properly planned, staffed, housed and synchronized with other sectors of the national economy.

Information is a commodity. It can be created, transmitted, stored, accumulated, commercialized, utilized, misused or even lost or merely looked upon from eccentric point of view. Thus information as an economic resource essential for development can be quantified. Jumba-Massagazi's statement clearly under-estimates development. In his analysis he addressed himself to "products" and "raising standards of living" without elaborating on whether the "products" he was referring to were made of ingredients essential to enhance an individual's standard of living - which we submit must be founded on proper sources of information or knowledge. It is perhaps pertinent to distinguish between "information and knowledge" as these two words tend to confuse the uninitiated.

"Information", within the utility context, means that corpus of a message which has a perceivable and recognizable value to the receiver. Accordingly "... information flow ... first occurs when some messages interact with a felt need."¹⁸⁾ On the other hand "scientific findings are systematised knowledge".¹⁹⁾ In other words "knowledge represents stored information, remembered primarily because it is believed that sometime in the future it might be useful."²⁰⁾ Knowledge may be personal or public knowledge.

Whereas the former is that body of knowledge which an individual professes to have acquired about a particular subject - e.g. basketry or information science, public knowledge is that corpus of knowledge which can be retrieved by recourse to either a library, archives or a documentation centre.

THE NATIS CONCEPT

Thus the intensification of conferences on information science resulted in four regional conference in Ecuador (1966), Sri Lanka (1967), Kampala (1970) and Cairo (1970) is a clear reflection in the programmes of Unesco to take stock of the problems which had been identified during the UN First Development Decade 1960 - 1970 and prepare these countries for the UN Second Development Decade 1970 - 1980.

These Regional Conferences culminated into the famous intergovernmental conference on Planning National Overall Documentation, Library and Archives Infrastructure which was convened at Unesco House in Paris in the fall of

1974. The meeting was co-organized in cooperation with IFLA, FID, and the ICA.

The most important outcome of the developments of the 1960s and 1970s was the establishment of UNISIST in 1971 and NATIS in 1973.²²⁾ These two programmes were aimed at systematising the manner in which institutions, nations and even individuals can best share their information resources. The cardinal principle being that no single country can be self-sufficient in its information needs.

This is a clear testimony that no single country - whether in the North or in the South can sustain all its information requirements without inputs from other countries.

It was this realization which prompted Unesco to overhaul its administrative structure in the 1960s which resulted in the unification of the DBA (Documentation, Bibliothèques et Archives) Department.

Throughout the 1970s governments, not only of the Third World but also of the industrialised nations were at various stages of implementing the NATIS concept. To assist governments in this regard, Unesco was called upon to unify the NATIS and UNISIST into what became to be known as General Information Programme (GIP).²³⁾ By early 1980s some countries had succeeded in their endeavours but others are yet to incorporate national information infrastructures in their overall national development plans. In the words of Dr. Quirino-Lanhounmey, the Director of PADIS, information services "... are a prerequisite without which it is futile to undertake any planning."²⁴⁾

PADIS

That NATIS concept has not taken root in some countries of Africa does not per se imply that the governments of these countries do not recognise the value of information for development planning. Some of the reasons for this dilatory approach to implementing NATIS are that the newly independent African states during the First U.N. development decade, i.e. from 1960 were primarily pre-occupied with restructuring their administrative capacities

through construction of necessary training infrastructures. This exercise spilled over into the second U.N. Development decade, and it is likely to continue.

However, by 1975 - one year after the NATIS conference, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) held a meeting in Algiers when an idea was mooted as to the need to develop a Pan-African Information Network. This concept was crystallized at a further Meeting which was held in Libreville in 1976. During the Council of Ministers meeting in Rabat, Morocco, in 1979 a concrete resolution was adopted which, *inter alia*, invited

"the UNECA Conference Executive Secretary to provide assistance to member-states in order to enable them to create national numerical and non-numerical information systems and services."²⁵⁾

This resolution in principle echoed the spirit of NATIS. It was immediately implemented by a joint UNECA-OAU-IDRC (Canada) feasibility study team.

The outcome of the study was a strong recommendation that there was need to establish a Pan-African Documentation and Information System. Following the acceptance of this recommendation by UNECA Conference of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa in 1980, necessary steps were taken to implement the programme. "The main operational objectives of PADIS are to provide ready access to information for policy makers, technicians, planners, financiers, and others engaged in the economic and social development of African states."²⁶⁾ These are to be achieved through a set of mechanisms and institutions.

SADIS

At their 7th Meeting in Freetown, the ECA Council of Ministers vide Resolution 413 (XVI) of the 12th April 1981 called for the implementation of the PADIS system at regional, sub-regional and national levels.

Preparatory to the implementation of resolution 413 (XVI) the PADIS Inter-governmental Meeting of African Computer, Documentation and Information Scientists was held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 19 - 23 October 1981. Leso-

tho's delegation to that meeting comprised Dr. Michael Sefali (the present Minister of Economic Planning), and Mrs. M.M. Lebotsa, the now University Librarian.

By Resolution I the Director of the PADIS project was invited "to accelerate the effective creation of National Information and Documentation Centres, in the African Region, in collaboration with African governments." By resolution II the Central Coordination office of PADIS was invited "... to give full support to National Information and Documentation Centres in the implementation of their national policies."

The meeting also adopted what came to be known as the "PADIS SALISBURY DECLARATION". The Participants to the meeting, declared, *inter alia*, that

"They approve the concept of the establishment of Information and Documentation Centres (NIDCs) at the national level and call upon the Director of the Project to expedite their effective implementation in order to enhance national and Pan-African co-operation in economic and social development planning."²⁷⁾

In the actual and effective implementation of this programme of action, the Salisbury Declaration recognises that "existing institutions at the national and subregional level should be strengthened ... with a view to their ultimate conversion into National Information and Documentation Centres."²⁸⁾

The implementation of the PADIS programme was to be staggered in three phases. Phase one was accomplished when the secretariat was installed in Addis Ababa. The third phase was preceded by a series of meetings at sub-regional level to lay the framework for the implementation of the programme at this level.

At a meeting held in Harare from 22 - 26 Februar 1982, representatives of nine SADCC member-states agreed to set up SADIS seat in Harare. Lesotho was represented by four delegates. At that time SADIS was seen as a *klingspin* in the development of information infrastructure in SADCC region. And a link between PADIS and SADIS would be ensured through the establishment of NIDCS.

Resolution three invites the Director of PADIS to collaborate with SADIS in order to accelerate the creation of National Documentation and Information Centres. At the same time it was expected that the African Bibliographic Centre (ABC), a co-sponsor of the Harare conference, located in Washington was to transfer some of its operations (SADEX) to Harare to form a nucleus of SADIS.

The early enthusiasm of SADIS is well reflected in the SADCC activities during 1982 and 1983 period which culminated in the feasibility study which was undertaken from 19th February 1983 to April 1983. Formally the mission recommended among other things that there be a SADIS network consisting of a Regional centre and nine National Centres.

The actual implementation of SADIS programmes is still on the drawing board.

NIDCs

It is already evident that the idea of establishing National Information and Documentation Centres is a direct outcome of UNECA meetings as well as PADIS meeting of October 1981.

In 1981 PADIS prepared and circulated a model document project which would serve as basis for the establishment of NIDCs.

On receipt of this document the Central Planning and Development Office in Maseru convened a meeting of relevant and interested institutions to take part in discussions that may lead to the establishment of a National Information and Documentation Centre for Lesotho. The first meeting was convened by the CPDO on 28 January 1982. It was attended by the National University of Lesotho Library, the Institute of Southern African Studies (ISAS), the National Teacher Training College (NTTC) and the CPDO. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the viability of the centre for NIDC for Lesotho based on a model supplied by UNECA.

It was acknowledged that for proper implementation of the project there was need for the centre to be run by the government in consultation with the

institutions in charge of information. It was also stressed that the government could integrate the centre either physically or operationally into the existing institutions. In order for this to be done the government would first of all up-grade the standard of these institutions.

From its minutes available in ISAS, the Steering Committee held 17 meetings between its establishment in 1982 and November 1984.

The Committees deliberation centred on a variety of issues which can be summarized as follows:

1) Appraisal of the PADIS document on how to establish NIDCs.

It was observed that not only was the prescribed document too ambitious but its prescription was far above what most developing countries in Africa can afford, both financially and from the point of view of qualified manpower. Secondly the document did not accommodate peculiar differences of each country, finally that the document was highly technically-based, emphasizing too much reliance of the system on computer based processes.

The Steering Committee also observed, among other things, that:

- "a) The NIDC should have a firm base upon which to operate i.e. the information and document services of the entire country or at least the main ones should be brought up to a reasonable level of competence, so that the NIDC should have a balanced domestic and foreign outlook.
- b) The idea of an information system to facilitate coordination at national level and cooperation at international level is very well received. Therefore both financial and manpower needs of existing information services should receive serious attention.
- c) The implementation of the concept of the NIDC should not be governed by lack of computer facilities and know-how. Lesotho should use the manual techniques available at her disposal, gradually working towards automation of the service."²⁹⁾

These observations highlighted the true position of Lesotho's capacity to undertake an ambitious project envisaged by PADIS without addressing itself to the peculiar circumstances prevailing in the country.

2) The State of Information Services in Lesotho

The second hurdle which the Steering Committee identified is what the Committee, based on reports from various information handling institutions, referred to as "... a generally low stature of information services" within the country. The available information handling institutions not only lack government recognition but generally suffer from inadequate physical facilities, lack of trained manpower; poor financial endowment, and above all, the lack of a national information policy and plans.

3) Institutional Placement of NIDC

The most crucial issue which occupied most of the time of the Steering Committee was the identification of a willing host to accommodate NIDC. As the Committee admitted:

Deciding on the location of the NIDC proved the most controversial and difficult task for the Committee. Upon no other issue were the views of the members of the Committee so divergent.

Several locations were identified but on examination of the deliberations of the Committee, there was no consensus as to which of the alternative was most suitable.

The following was identified as possible hosts of the NIDC:

- i) within Lesotho National Library Service in Maseru
- ii) sited at the National University of Lesotho in Roma
- iii) should be an independent entity within the government
- iv) CPDO to assume control and responsibility

An analysis of reasons given for and against a particular institution being designated NIDC seems to suggest that the primary objective of NIDC was not considered. Secondly, members who were on this Committee had participated in SADIS and PADIS meetings at which it had been recogni-

zed that NIDCs could be established through the strengthening of the existing infrastructure and whenever possible reinforced by statute.

The Steering Committee did a commendable job as is reflected in its undated Report - possibly written towards the end of 1983, highlighting the problems through which they had to plough their way.

Discussions with key government ministries did not yield any positive results. Though there were hopes that sooner than later the matter could be resolved either way.

4) STAFFING NIDC

The final constraint identified was the staffing of NIDC. This to us was not necessary because no location for the NIDC had been found.

JUSTIFICATION FOR A NIDC

At the beginning of this paper we gave an overview of Lesotho - topography, climate, economy, population, and government objectives during the Third Five Year Development Plan.

We also reviewed briefly why information is vital for development planning and why despite efforts by Unesco not many countries were able to realise NATIS concept. We additionally traced the evolution of PADIS and how it has been implemented. It was observed the PADIS network would function through regional networks, SADIS for Southern Africa. And that each country was to endeavour to establish a NIDC as a link between the various national information sub-systems and PADIS via SADIS.

We have observed that in Lesotho a Steering Committee, despite obvious shortcomings managed to sensitize government ministries to accord NIDC proper recognition through placing it under an appropriate government Ministry. Although so far all the Committee's recommendations have been put in abeyance, in what follows we try to justify the immediate location of an institution which could assume the functions of a NIDC.

Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, U.N. Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ECA has prescribed a recipe for the establishment of National Documentation Centres. He proposes that:

... The following steps ought to be taken in order that effective and viable national information centres may be established: (a) Inclusion in the national plan of a comprehensive information policy for documentation, library and archive services; (b) Creation of a co-ordinating body or focal point for documentation, library and archive services; (c) Preparation of a national plan for developing coordinated documentation, library and archive services; (d) Legislation to support establishment and development of information services already in existence; (e) Creation of a designated body responsible for planning and implementing documentation and archive services; (f) Establishment of a national bibliographic agency for ensuring bibliographic control of the national production; and (g) Initiation of a bold manpower development programme in documentation and information system.³⁰⁾

This recipe recapitulates the need to have a NIDC established. It is evident from the three development plans so far drawn that information services were not properly articulated and integrated in the country's economic development. If Lesotho has to restructure its services to accommodate the priorities for accelerated rural transformation as well as creating opportunities for employment, then the value of information must be recognized and accorded top priority in development.

In Sri Lanka, for example, the government has endeavoured to unify its information system for appropriate technology.³¹⁾ Similarly the government of the Barbados has, since 1980 created a National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres. This Council has taken charge of Public Library and the Archives.³²⁾

Starting in 1973, Israel recognized the value of information for "good medical practice, teaching and research." Towards that end it was proposed to inaugurate a national plan for a biomedical information network for the entire country. By 1976 these proposals had acquired a concrete dimension.³³⁾ The Latin American and the Caribbean countries have recognized the need to harmonize their information resources concerning UN International Drinking

Water Supply and Sanitation Decade 1981 - 1990. Consequently the governments of the region have formulated plans to launch a Regional Network for Information and Documentation (REPIDISCA). National Information systems are linked to REPIDISCA through National Co-operating Centres³⁴⁾ - in some respect the equivalent of Lesotho's proposed NIDC.

Finally, but not by all means, exhaustive, Dr. D.E.K. Wijasuriya has explained at length steps which were taken by the ASEAN countries to develop national information systems as a sequel to the implementation of the UAP (University Availability of Publication) Programmes.²⁵⁾

Nearer home, the Government of Botswana collaborates closely with the University in the development of the would be NIDC - The National Information and Documentation Centre.

In the light of these developments it becomes evidently more urgent for Lesotho to create a NIDC.

CREATING A NIDC FOR LESOTHO

As observed elsewhere in this paper, both PADIS and SADIS have acknowledged that owing to a dearth of resources, countries should be encouraged to require and up-grade the existing information services which would eventually serve as NIDC. This is one of the recommendations of the Steering Committee.

Since there are in existence several institutions - public, parastatal and private engaged in some documentation work - it is in our opinion quite legitimate to enlist the views of these organization before a concrete decision is taken to create a home for NIDC.

Secondly, without going into the merits or demerits of a particular institution, it is possible that Lesotho could, given the constraints that have been identified opt for a model that would best serve the entire community at minimum cost.

Given the present developmental capacity of both the Lesotho National Library Service and the National Archives, it is possible that these two institutions could be amalgamated into a nucleus NIDC on similar lines like the Barbados model.

The National University offers the best alternative given its organizational frame work, personnel, equipment, documents and clientele.

Distance from Maseru could be easily eliminated if the system became computerized and telephone services become more reliable.

The argument that NUL is far away from policy makers and implementers in our view can only be sustained if it can be proved that indeed these officials will in actual practice make use of the NIDC facilities.

In our view policy makers should tap the talents at Roma in order to increase their capacities to plan.

Other institutions which could be considered as host of the NIDC would be these which were discussed by the Committee on account of their limitations. Obviously that we need not address ourselves to the issue again.

The only institution which offers the best compromise, in our view, is the Instructional Materials Resource Centre (IMRC) which is a Unit within the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture.

This institution has the best printing facilities, reprographic equipment; it has adequate accomodation and is well situated in the proximity of the NTTC, NUL's Iems and Labour Institute.

FUNCTIONS PROFILE AND CLIENTELE

It would identify, collect, and disseminate relevant documentation for planners and policy-formulators as well as officials who implement decisions; it also will serve independent research workers. It is realised that varying conditions might impede co-operation with information sectors unless these adopt uniform terminologies; common standards in citation and referencing

should also be adopted. Rapidity of information transfer from sector to sector would require on-line information hardware whereby computer terminals, located in each sub-sector, will feed into and draw from the data bank at NIDC.

Services to be provided would include:

- Indexing and Abstracting services;
- Current awareness profiles, and retrospective bibliographic searches;
- Selective dissemination of information;
- Referral services;
- Documentation delivery.

NIDC PROFILE

1: OBJECTIVE

Depending on government overall development policies and objectives NIDC would collect, process, analyse and disseminate scientific and technical information concerning the country's development originating from inside and outside. It should be located nearer a Council for National Research. Location should be at geographically central point with easily accessible facilities.

2: FINANCE

- Contributions from government Ministries and other sectoral information Units;
- National Council for Research;
- Material and other subsidies from Unesco and interested international bodies;
- Service charges.

3: HOW SHOULD THE PROJECT BE IMPLEMENTED?

- a. If it is to function properly there is urgent need to train staff who will be able to plan the centres operations.
- b. Centre's function, powers, authority and status vis-a-vis other information agencies in the country should be clearly defined by law. This legal framework will ensure that there are no petty squabbles as to where the centre derives its powers.
- c. If the Centre has to be located at IMRC then all interested parties should come together and appraise the facilities already available and what is required in order to transform the Centre into a NIDC without disrupting the existing operations.
- d. The law regarding legal deposit, copyright, etc. should be promulgated so that nationally produced documentation is accessible to users.
- e. Sectoral information units in Ministries, private firms, International agencies should be encouraged to participate in national information network.
- f. Funding for NIDC should be sought only after all the preliminary ground work has been thoroughly done, and this would include the training of the core staff.
- g. There is also need to establish a National Council for Research which would act as a clearing house for all research undertaken in the country. This council could physically be integrated in the NIDC to minimise costs and ensure efficiency in its operations.

CONCLUSION

The need to establish a NIDC is founded on the premise that information is an essential economic in-put if Lesotho has to plan and develop her economy. Planners, policy makers, scholars, international donors agencies, school children, causal uniters should have ready access to steady supply of information and documents. This can only be achieved if there is a well planned, developed and managed NIDC with clearly defined linkages to other sectoral areas of information generation and consumption.

In order for Lesotho to take advantage of International Information Networks it must as a prerequisite create a NIDC which will co-ordinate such linkages.

A cursory look at the developments in other parts of the world tend to suggest that the move to centralise information services appears to have been spontaneously accepted in several countries in the World. This is evident from the available literature in UNESCO Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration.

Footnotes

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- 16) Ibid p. 82
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- 20) Ibid
- 21) For a brief analysis of the evolution of UNISIST see E.W. Muya, "General information Programme: some implications in Kenya" in ECARBICA JOURNAL Vol. 6 October 1983 p. 17-21
- 22) Ibid
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- 26) PADIS Project Documents for NIDCS objective: copy on ISAS file: DOC/X/LS-NIDC
- 27) PADIS Salisbury (HARARE) Declaration
- 28) Information on this section was gleaned from ISAS file Lesotho National Information and Documentation Centre: (DOC/X/LS-NIDC)
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- 31)
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ROLE OF A NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

by S.M. Mohai

I. INTRODUCTION

Different information services have a vital role to play nationally for the socio-economic and cultural development. These information services are archives, art galleries, documentation centres, libraries, museums, publishing houses, etc. But for the purposes of this paper I will concentrate on the first five mentioned information services. In developing this theme a questionnaire was used and issued to the following information services in Maseru and Roma as a sample on how they serve the national interests socio-economically and culturally. The questionnaire were issued to:

- a) The National Museum of Lesotho in Maseru.
- b) National Library in Maseru
- c) Triple M Art galleries in Maseru
- d) The Ministry of Agricultural Research Station Library Maseru.
- e) National University of Lesotho Archives which is a department of the Library at Roma
- f) National University of Lesotho Library at Roma
- g) and the Institute of Southern African Studies Documentation Centre at Roma.

I feel that the topic in question is in line with Unesco's strongly felt need of coordinating all information services along these lines "documentation, information, library and archives in all fields of knowledge were to be considered not as separate units but as part of one unified complex, the goal of which was to facilitate access to information." (Yearbook of U.N., 1974). I have included museums, art galleries, and publishing houses to the list because they also generate information for users' consumption.

The programme of the coordination of information services at national level was launched at the Unesco Conference which was held in Paris from 23rd to 27th September 1974, and the programme was named National Information

Systems (NATIS). That Unesco Conference had been organized in consultation and with due cooperation of the International Federation for Documentation (FID), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and the International Council on Archives (ICA) (Lebotsa, 1980). NATIS approach amongst others adopted: "A national information policy as its objective 1." The national information policy clearly spells out the information needs of different sectors of the community because information should always be readily at the disposal of policy-makers, planners, administrators, professionals etc. The whole community must therefore be made aware of the fact that "information should be recognised as an essential part of a nation's resources and access to it as one of the basic human rights" (Lebotsa, 1980).

In November 1983 the National Information Liason Committee in Lesotho submitted a report to the Ministry of Education on the state of library and museum services in the country. The committee was composed of people working in libraries, archives, museums, documentation centres, and civil servants. The terms of reference of this committee were as follows:

- 1) To identify and study the problems of museums, libraries and other information services in Lesotho.
- 2) To analyse the problems with the view to finding solutions;
- 3) To make recommendations to the Ministry of Education" (The Report of the National Information Liason Committee, 1983).

In as far as I can recall I haven't heard of any response from the Ministry of Education concerning the above-mentioned report; but I strongly appreciate the efforts made by the committee members towards the adoption of NATIS approach in the delivery of information services in Lesotho for the socio-economic and cultural development of the nation.

II. MUSEUMS: Their Contributions Nationally in Socio-economic and Cultural Development

A. Introduction

The word museum is derived from the Greek word "mouseion" which was defined by Guillaume Bude' in his *Lexicon-Graeco Latinum* (1554) as "a place dedicated to the muses and to study, where one engages oneself in noble discipline" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1975). The history of museums could be traced as far back as the 3rd century BC with the existence of the museum at Alexandria in Egypt which functionally served as a library, an academic centre, and as a research centre, unfortunately that museum was later destroyed (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1975).

One could define the word museum in various ways as follows:

1. "A place or building in which works of artistic, historical, and scientific value are cared for and exhibited (Morris, 1973); the International Council of Museums (ICOM) at its 10th General Conference in Copenhagen defined a museum as a "non-profit-making permanent, institution in the service of society and its development and open to the public which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment" (HUDSON, 1977);
2. It could as well be regarded as: "an institution that assembles, studies, and conserves objects representative of nature and man in order to set them before the public for the sake of information, education and enjoyment," (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1975).

From these three definitions it's quite obvious that a museum serves the country or the town or the city in which it is found as a relic of the past and present cultural behaviour of the nation; as such it contributes significantly to:

- i) educational needs
- ii) recreational needs
- iii) and as an information centre for research and study purposes.

B. Types and Collections of Museums:

Museums could be classified into the following categories:

- i) art museums,
- ii) historical museums
- iii) scientific museums, and
- iv) specialised museums e.g. Botanical gardens, game reserves, etc.

I will however not go into details in analysing the unique role played by all types of museums in the development of the national socio-economically and culturally. Normally in a museum one would find a variety of collected objects some of which are alive whilst others are non-living e.g. paintings, carvings, sculptures, artifacts, plants, animals, manuscripts, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, jewellery, etc.

One could then summarise the important role to consider when establishing a museum in the developing country in accordance with a description made by Geneviève Dournon-Taurelle about the Barthelémy Boganda Museum in Bangui (Central African Republic) who stated that a museum should be concerned with "to preserve a cultural heritage threatened by extinction in a more or less distant future and to reawaken public appreciation, particularly in the towns, of past and surviving material cultures."

C. Museums In Lesotho

I have indicated earlier on that the National Museum of Lesotho is among the information services I sent a questionnaire to on the topic in question; unfortunately I could not get in touch with another museum in Morija which in my view is the oldest museum in the country. The Museums Board is responsible for the guidance of the National Museum as specified in the Museums act of 1967 and the Museums Board is supposed to report directly to the Minister of Education. I should like to pinpoint that the National Museum has got some problems/shortcomings which act as barriers in its socio-economic and cultural development of the nation. Some of these barriers are:

- i. No ideal museum building/space: for collections and for their display;
- ii. Financial problems: this could be due to the Ministry of Education's priorities e.g. provisions for primary, secondary and tertiary education, etc. However I feel that cultural institutions shouldn't be neglected indefinitely;
- iii. Lack of equipment e.g. vehicles, photographic materials, films, display cabinets, etc.
- iv. Lack of adequate trained staff members.

Despite the above-mentioned short-comings I will then address myself to the developmental roles played by the National Museum as follows:

1. Social Role:

Socially museums contribute to the well being of the citizens of the country in that both literate and illiterate people view real tangible objects on display e.g. artifacts, carvings, sculptures, paintings, plants, animals, etc. It provides scholars and researchers with their national and cultural heritage in that collections in the museums reflect the past interests of the state e.g. the traditional attire of its people, the ancient tools and pottery, fossil records and Bushmen's paintings (in the case of Lesotho), etc. The Museum is also concerned about the contemporary issues facing national interests e.g. protection and preservation of rare animal and plant species which are threatened with extinction, in Lesotho this important task is under the commission for preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques and the protection of Fauna and Flora (PPC). Therefore the National Museum and PPC share similar interests with regard to the protection and preservation of Basotho culture. The recreational purpose of the National Museum of Lesotho correctly points out that people relax by viewing various items within the museum.

2. Economic Role

When I talk about the economic benefits derived from museums I don't necessarily refer to quick financial gains, but I refer to some of the likely bene-

fits to be gained in the longrun. In the case of Lesotho some benefits could be:

- i) Tourism industry,
- ii) Educational contributions,
- iii) Enhancement of research

I have already indicated that the National Museum in Lesotho works jointly with the Protection and Preservation Commission (PPC) for the protection of certain sites, plants, and animals in the country which are of natural and cultural value e.g. Bushmen's paintings, fossil records, game reserves, etc. These sites are attractive, as well as, of educational value to students and tourists alike and the country benefits from revenue earned from the tourists.

Educationally a museum can be very effective in that students view the exhibited specimen in their natural habitats. Also some documented information is provided about each collected item, usually visitors/students are taken on guided tours of different sections of museum. The museum staff can also reinforce whatever is available in their collections by film shows and lectures. In Lesotho students could benefit more from museums in that the education provided is both audio and visual.

Finally a museum should also be concerned with the provision of its collected resources for research. Therefore as a research oriented centre the museum should provide the fully documented information for every collected item, this implies that the museum staff should be familiar with the indexing and cataloguing techniques. Nationally researchers in the field of history, archaeology, natural science, etc. would certainly gain a lot of information provided in a museum. The information provided is also absolutely essential for administrators and policymakers.

3. Cultural Role

The museum above all serves as a national and cultural heritage in that all the exhibited and other collected materials are reminders of the past and

current practices of its people. Again the museum illustrates to its visitors the cultural development of the nation.

III. ART GALLERIES: their contributions nationally in socio-economic and cultural development.

A. Introduction

Art galleries are defined as: "buildings or rooms used consistently for the exhibition of works of art; hence secondarily, important public or semi-public collections of art objects, museums, and the show-rooms of commercial dealers in art" (The Eycyclopaedia Americana, 1958). From the definition it's clear that some kind of relationship exists between art galleries and museums in that they are both involved in the collection and exhibition of works of art e.g. paintings, sculptures, carvings, artifacts, jewellery, etc. The difference between the two is that museums are too embracive in that game reserves, snake parks, botanical gardens and national historical monuments are regarded as specialised museums. Historically art galleries could be traced from Ancient Athens where historical and mythological works of famous artists were collected in what is known as Pinacotheca (gallery of pictures).

B. Art galleries in Lesotho

There exists one privately owned art gallery in Lesotho which operates on commercial basis, it's known as "Triple M Art Gallery". From the questionnaire which I issued to the proprietor of the above mentioned art gallery I got some ideas about its socio-economic and cultural roles in national development. I also appreciated a very good suggestion from the proprietor of "Triple M Art Gallery" that developing countries should reconcile their economic programme and project to include art related facilities; courses in arts should also be offered in educational and technological institutions.

1. Social role

- i) Development of interests in the work of art: society gets exposed to the beauty of works of art e.g. paintings, sculpture, artifacts, jewellery, etc. If interest is awakened in the whole nation, this leads to creativity and curiosity of mind, so the creation of appealing works of art becomes a continuous process; ultimately this contributes to the exchange of ideas between students and intellectuals interested in the works of art;
- ii) The citizens of the country derive some enjoyment/recreation from viewing exhibited works of art;
- iii) There exists the cultural exchanges of works of art on national, regional and international level between locals and visitors.

2. Economic role

- i) There will be the development both nationally and internationally of interest in acquiring works of art and indigenous artifacts, this boosts the national economy and renders the financial benefits to the individual artist;
- ii) Creation of self-reliance and confidence for the artists and this is of national interest to the country in that people become self-employed;
- iii) Art galleries serve as attraction centres for tourists and this aspect is of national interest to the country concerned in that it gives a good reflection/name of the country internationally and in addition it generates income for the country from the sale of some works of art;
- iv) Art galleries are valuable for the educational and research needs of the country and are indicative of the past and current creativity in the minds of artists of that particular country. Therefore this significantly enhances the historical, artistic, scientific and cultural education on the national scale.

3. Cultural role

- i) Art galleries contribute significantly to the artistic heritage of the country, this implies that people of that country enjoy such works of art;
- ii) Development of community creativity: of course it's understandable that art and culture survive symbiotically i.e. they are interdependent;
- iii) Art depicts cultural changes of the nation i.e. this indicates whether the culture is static or mobile.

IV. DOCUMENTATION CENTRES: Their contributions Nationally in socio-economic and cultural development

A. Introduction

The term documentation is a "form of bibliographic control and organization that uses such tools as indexes, abstracts, and bibliographic essays, as well as the traditional methods of classification and cataloguing to make information accessible" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1975). Normally a documentation centre is a very highly specialised form of an information service in that its resources could just be merely for scientific and technical researchers, or commercial concerns, or for trade and industry. Therefore staff members of a documentation centre are expected to scrutinize and evaluate primary and secondary sources of scientific and technical publications or information in any other specialised field e.g. legal or health matters. In developing countries documentation centres could be "designed to respond to individual requests from scientists and research workers or other authorized users" (Atherton, 1977) and should be geared towards satisfying the following needs:

- a) "A bibliography compilation service designed to help the scientist or researcher to find out what has been published anywhere in the world on his subject;
- b) A document procurement service, to obtain for the scientist or researcher, a microfilm, microfiche, photocopy or technical paper that he may need for his work;

- c) A translation service to help him when the scientific or technical information is published in a language that he cannot understand" (Atherton, 1977).

Documentation Centres owe their origin from late 19th and early 20th centuries due to mounting research needs of scientists, and there was also the growth in the use of periodicals and primary sources of information e.g. unpublished research papers, conference proceedings, unpublished dissertations and theses.

B. Documentation Centres in Lesotho

There exist three documentation centres in Lesotho which are namely:

- i) Institute of Southern African Studies (ISAS) documentation centre,
- ii) A documentation centre at UNDP,
- iii) The Institute of Labour Studies documentation centre. In the near future the fourth documentation is likely to be operational, which is the proposed documentation centre for the Institute of Education at Roma.

Since the policy of the Lesotho Government is to intensify the training programme for scientists and technicians, therefore the documentation centres in this country which handle scientific and technical information could be well advised to adhere to the principles of UNISIST (Intergovernmental Programme for Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Information). The scientifically and technically oriented documentation centres ought to observe recommendations 15, 20 and 21 of UNISIST which are relevant to developing countries:

Recommendation 15. "A governmental or government-chartered agency should exist at the national level to guide, stimulate and conduct the development of information resources and services in the perspective of national, regional and international cooperation. These agencies should in particular give their support, or themselves adhere, to cooperative programmes or international scope, in consonance with the principles and goals of UNISIST."

Recommendation 20. "The existence of a qualified and adequately funded national structure for scientific research and development should be acknowledged as a prerequisite for the evolution of an effective scientific library and documentation network in any country. Subject to this condition, developing countries should consider the following actions as instrumental to the purposes of UNISIST:

- i) the establishment of a central scientific and technical information agency, responsible for planning and coordinating the information resources;
- ii) the establishment of cooperative agreements with other countries;
- iii) promotion of the adoption of standards, methods, and procedures that might facilitate the integration of information services a worldwide network."

Recommendation 21. "The action of UNISIST with regard to the scientific and technical information needs of developing countries should be:

- i) to provide a forum where on-going programmes of assistance to library and information services in developing areas may be discussed, irrespective of their organizational support;
- ii) to propose guidelines for the establishment and management of effective information networks in developing countries;
- iii) to take part in the design of a few pilot projects, together with other competent international organizations, aimed at assessing effective approaches for linking developing countries with UNISIST. (FID/DC Working group, 1975).

For the purpose of my paper I wish to concentrate on the role played by the ISAS documentation centre on the socio-economic and cultural development of the nation. But I hope my discussion about ISAS documentation centre one way or the other applies to the two other documentation centres mentioned earlier. The choice for ISAS documentation lies with the fact that I managed to send the questionnaire only to ISAS documentation centre and due to time factor I could not get in touch with the two other documentation centres. ISAS documentation centre has been supporting the research needs of the Institute of Southern African Studies since January 1982, whereas the Institute was established in 1979. This documentation centre however has got the following problems:

- i) Inadequate staffing,
- ii) Financial problems,
- iii) The problem of coordination of information services nationally to avoid duplication services. Despite these problems this information service contributes immensely for the socio-economic development of the nation.

1) Social Role

ISAS documentation centre extensively collects the Lesotho documents for specialised current research needs and for the future research needs of the Institute. Some relevant documents are also selected which are about eight other Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) countries viz. Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Some documents are also available on South Africa and Namibia. Therefore this information unit serves as a referral centre nationally for those who are interested on current and retrospective research on Southern Africa. Also Information on transferable technologies originating from outside Southern Africa is available.

2) Economic Role

- i. The centre provides information for research primarily on Lesotho and SADCC region, and the research findings lead to the development of the nation;
- ii. Information provided to users is usually current and beneficial for decision-making, normally the outdated information is weeded out.
- iii. The centre generates income from the sale of its publications e.g.
 - a) Lesothana (a quarterly annotated bibliography of new and newly located Lesotho material);
 - b) Lesotho clippings (published quarterly from newspapers and periodicals scanned);
- iv. There are plans to facilitate speedy information retrieval by the use of a microcomputer, which implies time will be saved on the part of staff by abolishing some manually operated indices.

3) Cultural Role

The centre publishes and stores materials of cultural benefits to Lesotho e.g. (a) "The role of women in Lesotho's Development: An annotated Bibliography" which was published in 1983, (b) "Economics and Politics of the Southern African Region: A select Bibliography of Recent Literature" which was published in 1983.

V. ARCHIVES: their contributions nationally in socio-economic and cultural development.

A. Introduction

Archives "records considered worthy of permanent preservation. The term, a collective noun derived from the Greek word *archeion* (government buildings), originally applied to the records of government agencies (public archives), corporations and business firms (business archives), and families and individuals (family and personal archives). The term is also used to designate the agency charged with the custody, preservation, and administration of archival material after it has become noncurrent, and the building in which archives are housed." (Collier's Encyclopaedia, 1969). Archives have been in existence in ancient time amongst the Greeks, Romans and Oriental people. In the Middle East and North Africa Archives are reported to have also existed in ancient times amongst the Hittites, Assyrians, Persians, Babylonians and Egyptians. But the modern concept of archives can be traced from 1789 with the establishment of the Archives Nationale in France, (Makatse, 1976).

Archival records are preserved normally for research and reference by scholars and the interested members of the community at large. In the archives hopefully one finds records such as phonographes, books, maps, papers, microfilms, microfiches, films, filmstrips, and other documents.

B. Archives in Lesotho:

There exist two types of archives in Lesotho viz.

- i. The National Archives which is the government agency in the Ministry of Education which falls under the Department of Sports and Culture;
- ii. The National University of Lesotho Library Archives (which is an example of an institutional archives). There might be other privately owned archives but to this date I have not heard of them.

a) The National University of Lesotho Archives: It serves as a repository for NUL materials e.g. lectures, research publications, library staff and administrative staff research publications, students' dissertations, theses and dissertations on Lesotho by locals and expatriates, Vice-Chancellor's reports to Council, etc. The archives also houses the Lesotho Government publications, rare books, private manuscripts and BOLESWA (publications about Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland). Lately materials on SADCC member states are being acquired as an indication of a regional cooperative venture. The main function of NUL Library Archives is to support teaching and research needs of students and lecturers.

b) The National Archives of Lesotho: This collection is temporarily housed in the archives section of NUL Library until the archives building is put up in Maseru. The collection is however separated from the NUL Library Archives. The National Archives is expected to perform the following duties:

- a) To acquire, organise, store and make available for use by researchers and members of the public documentary information, judged to be of permanent value, which has been generated in and/or about Lesotho;
- b) To plan and execute the development of archival services in Lesotho;
- c) To devise ways and means which will enable all information-generating institutions in Lesotho to assess and organise documents which may later be transferred to the National Archives;
- d) To take an active interest in the collection and storage of oral traditions;
- e) To act as the secretariat of the Archives Commission and to assist it in the execution of its duties.
- f) To co-operate and share information with other national archives and international organizations in archival matters.

I finally wish to look into the socio-economic and cultural roles played by archives in national development.

1) Social Role

Archives contribute to the social development of the community in that the archival documents are for educational needs of everybody.

2) Economic Role

- i. Archival records can be used for research purposes e.g. by historical researchers;
- ii. Archival documents contribute to educational needs of the community e.g. as a referral service for government officials for decision-making, for students and scholars, and for the community at large. Archivists can publish materials on historical nature of the country, can make exhibits for the public and organise guided tours to archives for students. All these arrangements will instil interest and awareness in the whole community towards realising archives as a disseminator of historical information.
- iii. Experts who come to developing countries to manage big financial projects need information in the form of feasibility studies, geological surveys, plans, reports, etc. the archives plays an important role in providing such documents which in themselves help these experts to avoid duplication of past errors and failures (Manyeli, 1983).
- iv. "Assist in carrying on the work of government by preserving and making available the evidence of its origins, development policies, as well as the authoritative sources of information on its structure, functions and activities." (Mbwana, Gessesse, Kanamugire, 1984).

VI. LIBRARIES: their contributions nationally in socio-economic and cultural development.

A. Introduction

A library is an information service which contributes to the development of the community it serves because of knowledge stored within it. The well organised library collection consists of books, journals, pamphlets, audio-visual materials (e.g. films, filmstrips, phonorecords, cassettes, microfilms, microfiches, etc.) Libraries are as old as the man's desire for scholarship e.g. the Great Alexandrian Library in Alexandria (Egypt) which was established by Ptolemy.

Since libraries are the recorded stores of the intellectual experiences of civilization they provide valuable information which upgrades man socially, culturally, educationally and economically. They should therefore be at the disposal of man in urban and rural areas especially in developing countries.

Libraries can be classified as public, national, school, academic and special libraries. These library groups serve different groups of users such as government departments, industrial concerns, colleges and universities, libraries for the whole community, primary and high schools libraries, etc.

B. Libraries in Lesotho:

In Lesotho one may find the following types of libraries: academic, national, school and special libraries.

- i. Academic libraries: several academic libraries exist viz. NUL (National University of Lesotho) Library, National Teacher Training College (NTTC) Library, Lerotoli Polytechnic Library, Lesotho Agricultural College Library, etc.
- ii. National Library: Lesotho National Library which is functionally a public library service.
- iii. School Libraries: some few primary schools own school libraries, but several school libraries are found in different high schools some of them are well organised whilst others are poorly organised.

iv. Special libraries: they serve specialised users such as government departments, industrial concerns, research stations, etc.

I issued three questionnaires to three different types of libraries viz:

- a) The National University of Lesotho Library (academic library)
- b) National Library (public library),
- c) The Ministry of Agriculture Research station Library (special library). I got the response from the first two mentioned types of libraries. I will therefore concentrate on the NUL and National Library as examples of how libraries contribute to socio-economic and cultural development of the nation.

1. Social Role:

- i. Libraries contribute towards an informed society by placing their resources at the disposal of the general public.
- ii. Providing service to educational needs of students by the provision of mobile service e.g. Lesotho National Library Service and British Council Library (with its programme of Learning Resource Centres) and NUL Library with its extension of service to extramural library members.
- iii. Libraries contribute towards the development of socially disadvantaged readers such as handicapped readers in hospitals and making book donations to the Prisons Department, these two services are provided by the Lesotho National Library Service (LNLS)
- iv. Book donations are provided on very large scale to NUL Library, LNLS, and to school libraries by British Council, this is valuable contribution for social enhancement of this nation. On some occasions the American Cultural Centre also makes some donations to some libraries in the country and these contribution are strongly appreciated.
- v. Libraries are ideal information centres to assist the government in its literacy campaigns especially the LNLS.

2. Economic Role:

- i. Educational contribution by libraries: Libraries' information is a vital asset for the improvement educationally of a majority of its citizens, therefore these people ultimately enjoy a higher standard of living.
- ii. Libraries provide information which is needed for decision making by policy-makers, professionals, legislators, politicians; etc.
- iii. Libraries provide information which is indispensable to researchers.
- iv. Libraries support the institutions of learning in producing suitable and adequate manpower with special skills for the economic development of the nation.

3. Cultural Role:

- i. Libraries serve as cultural heritage of the nation in that resources are available in print, picture form and information is kept for the posterity e.g. the BOLESWA collection at NUL Library and the Lesotho Collection maintained by the LNLS
- ii. Provision of books, grammophone records, tapes, cassettes, slides, films, etc.
- iii. Book displays which are mounted to celebrate certain important national holidays e.g. Moshoeshoe's day serve as cultural reminders to its people of achievements attained by such heroes.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- i. That all information services in Lesotho should all be coordinated with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts in information provision;
- ii. That the Lesotho Government should take an active role in the development of all information and cultural services; and I propose that libraries, museums, archives, art galleries, documentation centres must be provided with adequate funds, adequate staffing, suitable buildings, and enough documentary resources so that they would whole-heartedly contribute to the socio-economic and cultural development of the nation.

VIII. CONCLUSION:

I strongly feel that Lesotho can achieve the desired goal of coordination information services by working in close consultation with UNESCO and other related programmes e.g. NATIS and UNISIST programmes, and this would bring about the socio-economic and cultural development of the nation.

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THE FITTING OF NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES INTO REGIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS, AND THE USE OF SUCH
SERVICES/SYSTEMS

by M.M. Moshoeshoe

The topic which I am invited to speak suggests in the first instance, that there are about three levels of information services; the first is at a national while the two are respectively at the regional and international plane. In the second instance the topic implies that there should be a link in between these systems.

My task is therefore to examine with you how a national information system (Lesotho being an example) does or should fit into the regional and then the international services - structurally and functionally.

I should thus attempt to define what a system is; relate its general concepts to information field; outline the objectives of a system; analyse some main structures and types of regional/international systems, and programmes that Lesotho actually participates in, and those that it should still fit into; then emphasise the achievement and inadequacies where they exist. Again, I should commend systems which are effective and efficient and recommend the fostering of links where they are lacking.

A System

In defining this word the Oxford Dictionary refers to:

"An organized or connected group of objects"

"A set or assemblage of things associated, or interdependent, so as to form a complex whole."

"A whole composed of parts in orderly arrangements according to some scheme or plan."

"A set of elements in interaction."

"A conglomerate of interaction of similar or assimilar entities."

"The set of correlated principles, ideas ... belonging to some department of knowledge or belief; ... a connected and regularly arranged scheme of ... some subject."

In the case of information services and within the context of the topic, these connected things may comprise different establishments, public, academic, special libraries, archives, documentation centres, research institutions, educational institutions, bibliographic agencies, publishers, printers, abstracting and indexing services as well as related professional associations. It is the linking up of these into one group or set of groups which makes a system.

It is also their interconnexion and interaction which gives birth to information networks and cooperation.

Having seen and heard from the previous speakers how at the national level these services should interconnect and interact; we will then go further to examine the mechanism of fitting that national system into the regional and global one. Whereas in a geographically large country a number of institutions may be grouped together to form the so called a regional network, for the purposes of this account a "region" will be confined strictly to any bilateral or multilateral cooperation across the national boundaries.

The Purposes

It is essential to realise from the onset that there is a good reason behind cooperation and networks. If a long list of the above varied information services are to be found in numbers in every country; and all are to be proved to have similar goals; they definitely have to unite and collaborate in some way or another so as to achieve those goals.

By networking services, both similar and assimilar, will bring to one pool all the sharable resources, being information, education, manpower, experience and all types of resources. Some countries produce more than others the scientific and technological information which is internationally required. Those countries which produce less could have their users availing them-

selves of this information if institutions in the two worlds cooperate to facilitate that information transfer.

In most cases there are already intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations which are based in one particular headquarters. Their information will justly be needed by all members wherever they are; and a system of providing it will have to be found. Systems however, differ a lot in patterns in sizes and so even in objectives. That is why for each network policies, services and rules have to be well defined for or by members.

Areas of Cooperation

Services that often link up systems are as follows:

- a) Interlending Information services may share resources by interlending their materials as per agreed arrangements
- b) exchange - being means of swaping items
- c) joint acquisition - where by subject specialisation or location one is in a position to collect for others or vice versa
- d) Depository/storage - having one service designated that type of duty by others
- e) Cataloguing - which is done jointly to promote uniformity
- f) Referral services - for reference only
- g) education - long and short courses, staff exchange, formal training of any sort, workshops, seminars and the like
- h) Association - by coming together in unison institutions and professionals may form forums at which to discuss issues of common concerns
- i) Standards - in order that different services work well they have to understand each other's terminology, agree upon uniform procedures, and specifications which are convenient to the participants of one system. The International Standard Book Description, and format of MARC (machine readable catalogues) are the examples.

The first six above are usually enabled by bibliographies, joint catalogues, union lists, indexes and abstracts all of which regularly announce the holdings of participating institutions. Without these tools it would be a futile exercise only to imagine what to borrow from whom.

Structures

Frameworks within which information systems operate also differ. Often they develop within the already set political, administrative, social or cultural grouping. Unfortunately such systems are usually so dependent upon those structures that they soon collapse when their bases fall. The cooperation of the university libraries in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland after the UBLS split and that of the East Africa Communities are the samples.

Methods

The mechanism of operating large national information systems is likely to be efficient if it has what in different context are called focal points; national participants, centre, node; national information coordination committee, liaison office, sector and the like. These may be one per country; or be more whereby they are decentralised, centralised, hierarchical, integrated or not. What then exist in Lesotho and for which linkages?

1. Southern African Inter-library loan system

This is the first to be discussed not because it is necessarily the most important network to Lesotho; but because geographically it is the most immediate since it is based in Pretoria, the Republic of South Africa. The system is labelled 'Southern' because the participating libraries are in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, South Africa itself, Zambia and Zimbabwe. But administratively it is South African and solely belongs to the State Library. The first Lesotho participant in this scheme is the NUL library which inherited this membership from that of UBLS. The university's participation is therefore more than 20 years old. The National Library Service (NLNS) joined the scheme in 1980.

As individual services both NUL and NLNS should contribute copies of their catalogue cards freely. The State Library processes these cards to produce joint catalogue on microfiche. It prepares bilingual (English and Afrikaans) manuals guides and forms, which it sells and then acts as a clearing house for all bibliographic issues. NUL seems to have some efficiency of utilising

the system. It can also afford to subscribe to this joint catalogue. Consequently it meets a number of its users' request through the consortium of about seven countries in this region of Africa. In 1985 NUL Library handled about:

52 Book requests to other libraries; and 48 from others

111 Periodical requests to other libraries; 89 from others.

It is this reciprocity which is ideal for a network and which was to be commended.

On the other hand LNLS has no equal efficiency nor capacity. In most cases it fails to meet external requests even when the catalogue proves that it holds the material. This is due to heavy losses, insufficient copies, and other administrative shortcomings. In some other cases LNLS may refrain from using the system as well, only because as the regulation says "Inter-library loans should be used only when it is uneconomic or impractical for a library to purchase the required publications for its stock".¹⁾

Despite the fact that this is perhaps the most developed formal inter-library loan system in the region, it is, economically, politically and professionally of short term benefit to its customers. The State Library is now developing its catalogue on MARC (SAMARC) a useful technology which RSA could not sacrifice for the sake of its clients. All the computerised information services in South Africa alone are then able to join online as SABINET, and access the entire catalogue on Data Base. Lesotho is therefore, like her sister countries unable to use that fast and more efficient facility.

At a recent UNESCO conference held in Tanzania, a resolution was passed that:

"Efforts should be made to develop resource sharing in the SADCC region and gradually to reduce reliance on Pretoria."²⁾

In the meantime a survey is being conducted by the State Library to evaluate the Southern Africa interlibrary lending traffic. It would be interesting in this respect to know the overall results, the recommendations and follow-up.

PISAL - Almost similar to the above network is a system based in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for the National Advisory Council for Librarianship and Information affairs - Pretoria. CSIR lists Periodicals in Southern African Libraries. The NUL Library is one of the 376 libraries in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe that contribute to the venture. CSIR now holds records for about 70,000 serials titles announced by these libraries. The participants may subscribe to a microfiche list, which consequently facilitates the locations.

2. Agricultural information systems

A fair allocation of funds by the Lesotho government since independence, shows that this sector is one of those which are given due bias and priority. Being an agrarian country, Lesotho depends on agriculture for food sufficiency and about 30 % of revenue from cash crops. The Lesotho national information system should as a result pay special interests by providing agronomists, planners, educationists and researchers in this field, with as wide agricultural information as the entire world can provide. Relevant systems in this regard are:

a) AGRIS

In 1975 the UN agency of food and Agriculture (FAO) based in Rome, established what came to be known as Agris - a cooperative world agricultural information system; or an international information system for agricultural sciences and technology. The objective of this system is to enable all users of agricultural information, access to a very broad range of knowledge.

Agris receives some input being bibliographic details of information that is generated within the spheres of influence of participants. Agris stores all this into a data base; it prepares its multilingual thesaurus called AGROVOC and disseminates information or output which may be accessed online by the computerised services. That joint list of bibliographic details, called Agrindex may also be available on printed hardcopy or a magnetic tape. The policy is that these are directly utilised by 1) a national centre which is

designated by government; ii) and regional centre which may be a regional inter-governmental grouping; or iii) an international centre, being an international non-governmental organisation or an intra-governmental one like Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau in U.K. During the 1982 visit to Lesotho by the Agris consultant, the Ministry of Agriculture designated the library of the Agricultural Research Division (ARD), the duty to be the national participant to the system. As such, the library is charged with the duty to trace, on behalf of everybody in Lesotho all agricultural material. They may allow her as well, their bibliographic information on agriculture; so that it is input as Lesotho contribution to the system.

The choice of MOA for ARD was well made, and as Parker concludes ARD's "is the most important agricultural library in Lesotho."³⁾ However, statistics alone shows that though Lesotho joined the system very late - about seven years after it was established, Lesotho is in addition unable to catch up and make a good start. Since 1982 only six items have been received by Agris. Again, besides individual users who happen to know about ARD and contact it when need arises, a majority of agricultural experts who are scattered throughout the rural areas of the country never have a chance to know or use the service which is their right. In brief even in the urban areas no institution has satisfactorily stimulated the anticipated interaction between Maseru and Rome. One obvious factor which hampers maximum use of Agris by ARD is its shortage of staff. Another is the complexity of Agris methodologies which require special training before any input or requests can be made. The three copies which Agris gives free of charge could be allocated to ARD, NUL library and Lesotho Agricultural College.

Agris itself participates intensively with other relevant international systems. The examples are i) INIS (International Nuclear Information System of IAEA in Vienna); In fact INIS was the first international information system in a real sense, and Agris learnt a lot of its methods from her, ii) PADIS which we will discuss later, iii) DEVSIS (Development Sciences Information System) and iv) UNESCO CDS/ISIS, all of which have some functional compatibility. Hence by joining one system, a national centre might indirectly have an advantage of learning about others.

CARIS - secondly, ARD, as thus a national centre, should have had contact with Agris sister system called CARIS - Current Agricultural Research

Information System. None of very important agricultural research being conducted in Lesotho has been reported in the system. The Agricultural Marketing Research - a large scale survey by ISAS is an example.

One observes that in the case of regional interaction, the ECA's north and west African sub-regional centres, (MULPOC's - Multi-lateral Programming and Operating Centres) in Niamey and Yaounde are CARIS participants while the Lusaka one serving Southern and Eastern Africa and which Lesotho should fit into, is not yet designated a regional centre.

ILCA The International Livestock Centre for Africa based in Addis Ababa, is an inter-governmental research institute whose task is to identify the technology and policies that will develop African livestock and other agricultural sectors. This has enabled the centre to develop a concentration of material on this specialised topic. ISAS Documentation and Publications Division as an individual receives most of ILCA's publications directly. It attempts to give feedback about its research activities as well. It is hoped that ARD will officially register as a member on behalf of Lesotho. In return it would make use of relevant information for Basotho livestock farmers.

AGLINET - Agricultural Libraries Network has an information system by which they cooperate in a number of areas. Lesotho is not yet linked to this system.

3. Trade Information

One sector of concern for development is trade, tourism and industry. In order to mark progress there, Lesotho should be able to produce items which will find a place in the world market. It should be in a position to attract investment and be knowledgeable of competitive prices, tariffs and norms surrounding both regional and international trade.

I am convinced that it was for this reason that the Lesotho government requested advice on ways and means of establishing Trade Information for Lesotho. In April 1977 the Geneva based International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT sponsored a mission whose terms of reference were, among other things, to advise on the setting up of trade information service in the

country. That service would formalise links for a regular flow of information in between relevant regional and international centres.

The Trade Promotion Unit (TPU) was consequently established in 1978 as a integral part of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism. The Unit was envisaged to be a national link between Lesotho trade and the worldwide services. So far, despite its manpower, space and other limitations, the Trade Information and Publicity section of TPU houses over 1000 current books and periodicals a majority of which come from ITC itself. It provides general and selective dissemination of information to exporters and tourists; handles special enquiries and acts as an active contact for Lesotho:

- i) regionally with South Africa, SADCC, Chambers of Commerce,
- ii) internationally, with ITC's networks and for instance, with EEC.

Finally, the section publishes export guides, catalogues, brochures, trade statistics, newsletter and a bibliography. These reference tools are utilized for cooperating with external institutions.

By the time the unit has overcome some of its major obstacles, and has risen to a level where it can i) decentralise its service to all industrial areas such as Mputsoe; ii) outreach masses of exporters like LDA in Mafeteng and Setsoto Design in T.Y. It will be in a position to collect the nation-wide requests and information on patents and standards. Only then shall it functionally qualify as a national link to international trade and contacts like WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) and INPADOC - (International Patent Documentation Centre).

4. PADIS/SADIS

Out of the need to supply information to decision makers, planners and those who are engaged in the economic and social development of Africa States, in April 1980, a UNECA conference of ministers held in Addis Ababa, approved a resolution which empowered the Executive Secretary to implement the PADIS (Pan-African Documentation and Information System). The proposed network of numerical and non-numerical information exchange was meant to have five Sub-regional components, namely EADIS, CADIS, NADIS, SADIS

and WADIS, respectively to serve East, Central, Northern, Southern and West Africa. These were to be linked to National Information and Documentation Centres (NIDC's). The system was inaugurated at the ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa in January 1981.

At the consultative meetings, in preparation for the decentralisation of the system to the Southern Africa region, it aspired that networking of information service was a long overdue necessity. At these forums, SADIS was thus welcome and found as a likely information sector within the SADCC framework. This idea apparently did not materialise perhaps because SADCC perception of "Southern Africa" is conflicting with; or not necessarily the same as ECA's.

The Lusaka MULPOC is an example as it serves Southern and East Africa. Wherever the boundary is, that matters a little. What is important is that PADIS is in operation, more especially at its headquarters where it acquires development literature. Most of this literature is however only being published by ECA and OAU. These are processed by the OECD's Macrothesaurus and listed in DEVINDEX Africa which is distributed as hard copy to members or interested parties in Africa. This index is also available on magnetic tapes which may be exchange for information from compatible systems like Agris. Both NUL library and ISAS receive this index. Besides this, there is no practical relationship between Lesotho and PADIS at this stage. It is only the establishment of SADIS which will enable an efficient fitting of a national system to intra-governmental one. In the meantime, it would be helpful for all those who are involved in Lesotho, to revive talks on the way NIDC and its focal points may be structured.

5. The Library Association

In considering networks it is proper to mention the role played by professional associations which plan forums, seek sponsorships, design programmes, all of which are finally approved, applied internationally and then put into effect as systems. Most relevant to Lesotho are:

- a) SCECSAL - Standing Conference for Eastern, Central and Southern African Libraries. Cooperation within this structure has strengthened

every year. The Lesotho Library Association which is a link was honoured, in 1980 to host the fourth of this biannual meeting. The Association had been assisted financially by sponsors including COMLA, IFLA and UNESCO. As an international activity, the conference was not only an eyeopener to most of us here in Lesotho, it also enabled local, regional and international information services to be discussed under the theme of Book Promotion and the Sharing of Resources in Africa which touches on the theme of this workshop. The coordination of national systems is still of concern to SCECSAL.

- b) COMLA - The Lesotho Library Association is also a member to Commonwealth Library association.
- c) IFLA - The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions is the biggest organisation in the profession. Its membership is over 1100 and it comprises libraries, associations and personal affiliates in about 120 countries. IFLA enjoys a consultative status with UNESCO as well as an observer status with WIPO, ISO, FID and ICA. It decentralises its services from its base in Netherlands through its 3 regional offices in Africa; Asia and the Pacific; and Latin America and the Caribbean. IFLA operates by professional groups which carry out the function of all those special interests of the organisation. So a member registers for groups in which her/his interests are covered. LNLS and the Lesotho Library Association are members. Under the country's financial constraints, where membership fees are seriously felt or hard to come by, it would be economic if both members could reap full fruits of IFLA by registering for different groups of relevance to Lesotho as a whole; rather than when each covers a few groups just for her organisational interests only.

6. UAP

When discussing international information systems, beliefs and programmes, it is fitting to include UAP - the Universal Availability of Publications plan. UAP is an idea which was conceived as an argument that a programme of Universal Bibliographic Control was not an end in itself. Instead, information scientists should, after controlling material bibliographically, be able to make

those material available to users wherever they are and whenever they require the publications. This argument became strong when its was adopted as the theme for the 1978 IFLA congress. The message of the concept is the need for the widest and easy availability as well as supply of publications throughout th world. The objective of the programme, as a complement as well as a followup to UBC, is to improve availability of all recorded information, issued for public use; to remove all barriers to accessibility at the local, national, regional and international levels. This is a fair scope because if a user in Asia requires a book which was published in Botswana for instance, one wonders who should know best the whereabouts of that book? Of course it is Botswana more than any one else.

How does UAP affect Lesotho

Firstly, by its universality, secondly by its demand that it is the responsibility of every country to acquire, announce (through bibliographies) retain/store and supply its own imprints.

But obviously when we direct this responsibility generally to a country as a whole we only become vague. Who specifically in Lesotho should acquire or collect publications, announce them to the entire international community, store them for their future use and even supply them anywhere anytime as UAP requires? Here the theme of this workshop lies. It is only a well co-ordinated national information system which may fit best to an international service. It must be agreed nationally and be made mandatory that there be a centre/or centres which:

- a) Acquire - perhaps through legal deposit or other arrangements all material published in a country;
- b) Announce - through a national bibliography, or special lists, or abstracts and indexes
- c) Store and supply; perhaps as a lending or reference centre/s, a contact or focal point for all international requests.

In the absence of this arrangement in Lesotho, it is regrettable that we are unable to meet the demands of UAP, and yet Lesotho benefits from a near similar set-up for example by directly consulting the British library lending division for any British publication. This imbalance of one sided flow of

publications has to be corrected. In what way can it be put right? The IFLA office of UAP has researched on the subject and listed model national systems that might be tried by any country aiming at answering the question above. I suppose a decentralised model whereby the responsibilities of collecting, retention and supply are formally concentrated on few libraries would be ideal for Lesotho. However a focal point just as a contact institution would still be required. Perhaps LNLS would be a suitable place.

Finally, an element of a speedy supply of publication has to be addressed. In the developed countries like Britain, (one good advocate of UAP) not only efficient postal services are available to support document delivery; but in addition advanced telecommunications for sending telefacsimiles as well.

Available at the Lesotho disposal are ordinary postal services and telexes only. As a result, it is for each one to conclude as to what an extent and as at present, Lesotho may satisfactorily meet this one and other calls UAP.

7. Grey Literature

In both the developed and developing countries, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of grey literature. This term has been defined and used by several individuals and organisations - such as the Commission of European Communities (CEC), the British Library, the German Research Society and the DEVSIS Team (Development Sciences Information System). In summary, the following have semantically referred to this literature.

'all those publications which are published outside the book trade, and which have information value, either for practical or research purpose;'

'semi-published', or 'not formally published material'; 'non-conventional literature, not available commercially, and consequently difficult to trace bibliographically',

'all the invisible, fugitive or hidden literature; and 'the type which falls within the categories of Reports, Theses/dissertations, conference papers and proceedings, some official publications, supplementary publications, business and group literature'.⁴⁾

Non-profit making organisations such as governments, and academic institutions are the biggest producers of this material which unfortunately is obscure and not as visible as published books.

Since it is my thesis that in the developing countries the amount of grey literature may be high also because book trade and publishing is poor, Lesotho, like all other third world countries, should even take special interest in the material because its is including most of its development literature which is relevant for research.

The Southern African librarians who underlined the importance of this literature, at their recent meeting on resource sharing, could serve their region adequately if they considered a special formalised system of collecting, arranging and supplying grey literature; perhaps in more or less the same way as CEC does with SIGLE (System for Information on Grey Literature in Europe).

At the national level however, ISAS stands out in its endeavours to concentrate 'primarily on Lesotho and generally on a Southern Africa grey literature. Though the centre continues to serve almost the entire country in providing grey literature, it was only given this duty by the university. It would be in order if this role could officially be recognised as national.

At the regional level ISAS has collaborated in all respects with her counterpart research institutes in Botswana and Swaziland - being the NIR and SSRU. A possibility of the three developing this cooperation into a formal system could be explored in June 1986 when the staff of the three institutes meet for the third time.

Training

Lesotho has no policy by which it fits into either regional or international training systems. Each institution decides individually. Sponsorships too, most of which have come from the British Council and DSE, have only been organised by individual employers through the National Manpower Development Secretariat. A relevant national information committee could liaise with NMDS to set priorities.

8. U.N. Publications

As an international organisation, UN has got one of its aims as being 'achieve international co-operation in solving international economic social cultural and humanitarian problems ...' This wide scope of interest is reflected in the amount of publications which are generated by the organisation itself or through its varied agencies. In order for every member not only to be informed about the UN itself; but also to be an active part of that body, each should justly receive all the documents distributed for public, so that it may follow up UN recommendations either alone, with other members or with the responsible agency, and then give the required feedback.

The complexity of acquiring UN documents is caused by the fact that the organisation comprises numerous agencies, commissions and offices which are scattered throughout the globe. For example UN headquarters are in N.Y., UNESCO is in Paris, FAO is in Rome, UNIDO in Vienna, HABITAT/UNEP in Nairobi and ECA in Addis Ababa. Furthermore, the collection of information from or about these agencies is likely to attract a number of national offices having special interests in their activities.

What does this mean to Lesotho:

One observes that during the academic year 1968/69 the then UBLS library gained the depository status for some UN publications. It is but not clear for which categories of UN materials the library is the depository. It does in addition receive some ECA publications and in fact in 1968/69 this was the only capable library in Lesotho that could be relied upon for this duty. Even at present it can accommodate more than any library in the country, various disciplines of this international body.

That would even be convenient to users to have one access point for all UN Publications. At the same time, as mentioned, a number of services have now emerged and developed to a degree that functionally they might claim a right to some involvement in UN activities. In 1972, three years before the establishment of Agris, the library started receiving the FAO publications as well. In 1982 ARD became a national link to Agris. Furthermore, it was recognised as the library for the entire Ministry of Agriculture which has interest in FAO's publications. Lesotho Agricultural College receives some

FAO's material and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a Documents office which accumulates some UN publications. As stated above UNCTAD/GATT places by gratis some of its documents at TPU. Finally there are some UN missions in Lesotho which get some related material. The UNDP Documentation Centre and the FAO library are some examples. On the whole the situation regarding UN publications is confusing, sketchy and ambiguous. An enquirer is at a loss as to what all these centres are actually concentrating on; and to what level. It is high time indeed that fields that they cover are clearly defined.

9. Archives

The unique function of archives in the preservation of the national records has I believe been fully outlined by the previous speakers. So has the state-of-the-art of all public, academic and private archives in Lesotho. It is obviously however that the situation is not very satisfactory to either an archivist or the user. Congruent to that state of affairs is the manner in which the system should fit into the regional and international one: The immediate regional grouping worth mentioning is SADCC whose publications are apparently deposited with the Botswana National Archives. As it has its secretariat in Botswana, it is understandable that SADCC material should be kept there. It would be assumed that the national and government archive would therefore be a corresponding link in between Botswana and the SADCC coordinating offices in Lesotho, the government archives (which are housed at the NUL library) have not had any such interaction with the Lesotho SADCC office which is housed in the Ministry of Agriculture.

Another network exists within the aegis of ECARBICA (East and Central Africa Regional Branch (of) International Council on Archives).

The government archives, though its official memberships there may not be confirmed, has benefitted in a number of ways - attendance in conferences; professional advices and visits. Unless archives are raised to a satisfactory level nationally, it is premature to consider how they may effectively fit into regional, let alone the international systems.

10. Standardization

This subject is deliberately discussed last because it allows one to summarise the topic. Does the Lesotho information system comply with methods norms and standards? Or do international ones exist at all?

To a certain extent, systems try time and again to work towards achieving uniform standards so that they may communicate with ease. To some other extent they do not, or they fail. For instance, even within the UN family, methodologies may differ. We should be eager, to learn from NUL library if it classifies the UN publications by UNBIS⁵⁾ methods, FAO's by Agris system, ECA's by PADIS methodologies or all of them differently by NUL local scheme.

This is one problem of international systems. In order to conform to practices of a network the partners in that cooperative have to seize to be different individuals of different methods. Another related is that in fact the participants may be assimilar as they operate even within different environments - there are poor as well as prosperous ones. In that way uniformity becomes difficult.

CONCLUSION

Obviously the existing national information services are haphazardly operated. There is no cooperation nor coordination which would facilitate a smooth interconnection with varied regional and international systems. A majority of links with the outside world are only forced through to Lesotho even before they may be discussed as to their suitability.

A number of regional and international systems are not discussed. Some, like cooperative systems among the BLS universities have been found rather loose, informal and too unelaborate for this theme.

Even though they are important in their own right, it is hoped that the provided list is representative of all of those relevant to Lesotho. What is required then is to consider how they may improve their services. Factors

that will facilitate a well coordinated system are: - willingness and goodwill first of all to cooperate and collaborate at all levels

- avoidance of duplication in all areas
- recognition of existing services and their special functions especially to a nation as a whole
- determination to strengthen into firm structures, the existing services rather than establish new ones.

A sincere participation in developing information services is not required of information workers only; but fortunately or unfortunately, even of decision makers by whom, often national policies have to be approved.

UNESCO has just published guidelines on National Information Policy which will assist it determining and creating an overall responsible body. It would be worthwhile and opportune for Lesotho to make use of it.

A number of international systems do exist eg. BLS informal cooperation which if we prioritise, will call our attention later. Others, if we measure our strengths, despite our need to join them, are beyond our reach e.g. MEDLINE, INIS. Bi-lateral cooperation by individual institutions also exist, however, we may not enumerate all. It suffice there to conclude from the given list that the fitting of Lesotho with regional and international information system requires to be redesigned anew.

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Footnotes

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- 2) Unesco/Kaungamno
- 3) Parker p.4
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- 5) UN Bibliographic Information System

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL: A CASE STUDY - THE MINISTER'S SPEECH

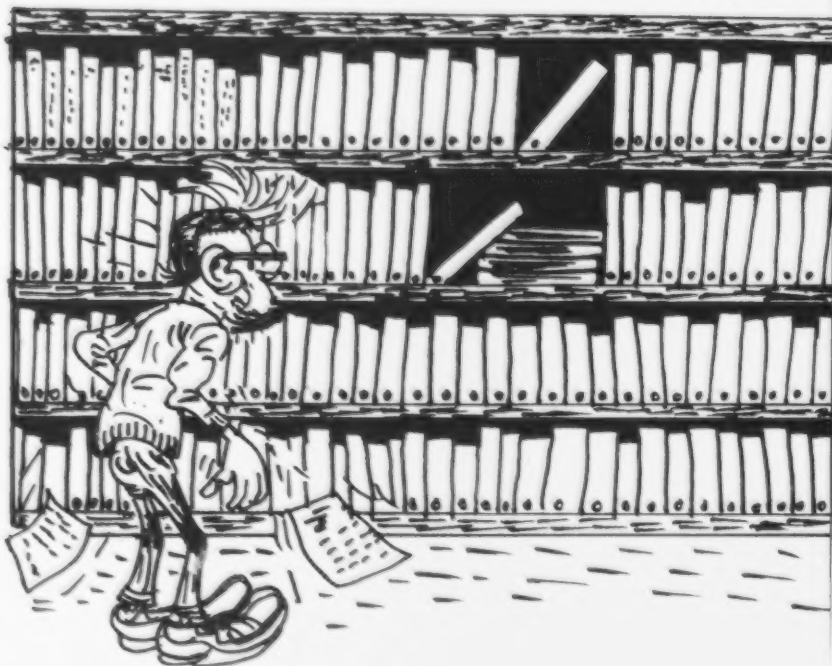
by J.R. Neill

Introduction

Over the last few years numerous conferences, seminars, and workshops have taken place in various countries throughout the region each in their own way dealing with the management of information as a national and regional resource. These occasions have been addressed by eminent practitioners within the Region, scholarly papers have been presented, resolutions have been tabled, and the proceedings have usually been produced and widely disseminated. Yet we return at periodic intervals to subsequent conferences, voicing the same platitudes, enumerating the same grievances, articulating the same tired, old and worn out phrases, and lamenting that our good work and noble intentions do not appear to be recognised and our recommendations are not being implemented.

The intention of this paper therefore is not to provide a repetition of what we all have heard before, or what we know already, or prescribe what we know is unobtainable in the future. It will instead attempt within the confines of a workshop environment to provide a framework in which problems can be identified and discussed and solutions can be sought after and shared. What follows is a case study not of a library, but of a particular individual who is faced with the problem of having to seek out information on a certain topic in a specified period of time. The objective of the case study is for us to find out how in reality your library could respond to such a search, what problems would the user meet upon the way, and how best we as librarians, documentalists and information workers can respond to meet these problems. The end result should ideally provide us with a catalogue of problems and solutions appropriate to each type of library, documentation centre and information service. Ideally such a practical problem solving approach should form the basis and a proper foundation for the eventual development of a national and ultimately regional approach to information management.

THE PROBLEM



The year is 1989 and Lebohang Letsie who has recently been appointed as a Research Officer in the Ministry of Commerce returns to his desk looking dejected. Soon after Lebohang had arrived at work that morning The Minister had called him to his office and after formal instructions began to explain the project he wished Lebohang to work on. "As you know there has been some considerable debate over the direction our next Five Year Development Plan should take, and I will be leaving for Harare in three weeks time to address a SADCC Council of Ministers Meeting on this very issue." The Minister continued, "Accordingly I have set you a research project relating to the anticipated future developments that are being envisaged for our Kingdom during the next five years or so. I would like you to prepare a thoroughly documented report on this issue making sure you consult a

comprehensive selection of relevant source materials. You have two weeks to complete the report and naturally I will wish to see the initial drafts from time to time."

After returning to his office Lebohang sat down at his desk stunned, he had anticipated a little more direction than that. In total desperation he went to see his good friend Moliehi and explained his problem to her. After looking at each other questioningly for a few moments Lebohang finally broke the silence, "Well do you have any idea where I can begin?"

"I suppose you ought to go to a library," Moliehi replied. "Surely the information you require should be there?"

"A library does sound like the right place to start but how do I find the information I need once I get there?" Lebohang asked:



THE SEARCH



Lebohang soon arrives at YOUR library and fortunately the first person he meets is Superman's younger brother SUPERLIBRARIAN who has just flown down from the planet PADIS, where he lives, to sort out some information retrieval problems in Maseru.

"Don't worry Lebohang," says Superlibrarian, "I'll show you how to use the library and find the information you want."

The remainder of this paper will follow Lebohang and Superlibrarian on a journey through your library and at various points along the route there will be an opportunity for us to stop and rest in order to discuss various problems relevant to your library that our two intrepid voyagers may meet along

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the way. Ideally once we have identified a particular problem and discussed it we should hope to arrive at a solution which of course may be relevant and applicable to a number of other libraries in Lesotho and the region.

The Scope of the Topic?

Naturally the first thing Lebohang has to determine is what exactly is the scope of the topic he is researching, and what exactly is he supposed to find out about anticipated developments in Lesotho during the next five years?

For example does it involve

- Industrial Development
- Development of Natural Resources
- Development of Human Resources
- Social and Cultural Development
- Agricultural and Rural Development

or perhaps a combination of all of these various aspects of the same theme?

Naturally he will tend to redefine the scope of the topic as the literature search and research work progresses, nevertheless as a preliminary, the outlining of such questions to begin to determine the parameters of the research topic is an essential pre-requisite to conducting a proper literature search.

The Library Collection: an overview

Once Lebohang has determined the scope of the research topic he is almost ready to begin the search, but before he actually starts, Superlibrarian briefly outlines the scope of the library collection and explains the type of materials that ought to be consulted in order to carry out a comprehensive and efficient literature search.

Superlibrarian explains to Lebohlang that essentially he will be dealing with the following broad categories of materials.

- Finding Tools catalogues, indexes, abstracts, bibliographies and even computerised data bases, all of which help us identify and locate specific documents.
- Primary Source Material archival records, statistics, official records, unprocessed data which in general is original material that has not been interpreted, condensed, or evaluated.
- Secondary Source Material books, articles in journals or any material which contains information that has been extensively used and modified from primary sources.



LESOTHO: ECONOMICS

330.96816

LESOTHO: GEOGRAPHY

916.816

LESOTHO: HISTORY

968.16

Superlibrarian explains to Lebohang, what the alphabetical subject index is, what purpose it is supposed to serve and how it can be used. Lebohang is obviously excited and is soon to be found locating subjects in the index and noting down their class numbers.

This now is one of the times that we can temporarily leave our two voyagers and discuss just how effective Lebohang's search of the alphabetical subjects index would be in your library. We can start by asking a number of questions:

- Does your library provide access to information via an alphabetical subject index?
- What problems do you think Lebohang would have in your library seeking for information on the proposed topic, through an alphabetical approach to the various subjects?
- How are the entries actually constructed in your alphabetical index?
- Does your index provide access to all subjects, and is this access at a general or specific level?
- What index language is employed in the construction of your subject index, and does it cater for synonyms and superordinate terms?
- Would Lebohang successfully find the information he was seeking in your alphabetical subject index?

Meanwhile Superlibrarian has been showing Lebohang the rest of the catalogue. Although finding it a little difficult at first Lebohang eventually understands how the classified file works, with the alphabetical subject index.

"Let's leave the catalogue for a while," says Superlibrarian, "we can return later to see how the rest of it works, but for the moment I want us to look at Bibliographies, Indexes and Abstracts which are very important searching tools that cannot be ignored.



Naturally when Lebohang was noting down possible titles from the classified file a number of items appeared on his list which were referred to as bibliographies, indexes and abstracts. Lebohang asked Superlibrarian to explain what these types of books were and how they could be useful to him in his search.

At this point we can leave Lebohang and Superlibrarian in order to discuss the provision of these information resources in your library.

Once again a useful approach will be to pose a number of questions regarding the provision of these bibliographical and information resources within your library.

Does your library maintain a basic collection of reference of tools?

Does your library provide answers to simple factual reference questions?

Maintain a basic collection of bibliographies, indexes and abstracts?

Prepare selective bibliographies?

Prepare indexes of local journals including newspapers?

Undertake literature searches?

Distribute library prepared abstracts of current literature, especially that relating to Lesotho, that has been recently received?

Regularly prepare and supply current awareness lists for the specific requirements of individual users?

Of what use do you think your collection of bibliographies, indexes and abstracts would be to Lebohang in his search for material on Lesotho?



025.3 Needham, C D
Organizing knowledge in libraries:
an introduction to information retrieval/
by C.D. Needham.-2nd.rev.ed.-London:
Deutsch, 1971
448p.: ill.; 23cm.

Bibliography: p. 435-436
Includes index
ISBN 0-233-95836-3

1. cataloguing I Title II Series

0

After scanning through the various bibliographies and indexes Lebohang is keen to see whether the library has some of the books mentioned that he has made a list of. Superlibrarian guides him back to the catalogue, which list in alphabetical sequence all the books that the library possesses. Lebohang soon sees that the catalogue entry contains a brief description of each book although it does not really tell him how useful the book will be. In addition while he at first imagined that finding items in an alphabetical arrangement would be easy he did experience some difficulty in particular with African names which were not always filed where he imagined they ought to be. Most disappointing of all was his realisation that the library did not possess every book on his list which was particularly frustrating as he had spent such a long time identifying them in the libraries own bibliographies.

Let's leave our two investigators once again and spend a little time discussing the library catalogue, in particular the alphabetical section and see if we can identify any problems your library may experience with the construction and maintenance of the catalogue and what possibilities there are towards developing a common approach to the development of bibliographic records in Lesotho.

As we have done previously the best way to do this is to pose a number of questions about the catalogue in your library.

Does your library use codes for bibliographic description?

Does your library have any difficulty dealing with headings for personal authors from Africa in particular Basotho?

Has your library a definite policy with regard to corporate headings especially those of Government agencies?

Does your library follow a consistent practice in filing catalogue entries?

Does your library practice limited, simplified or selective cataloguing?

How successful would Lebohang's search through your catalogue be, in particular the Author/Title File?

Would Lebohang be able to find the materials he had located through the bibliographies held by your library?

Computer access to Information

Naturally by the year 1989 your library may have access via a computer terminal to:

Information within your library through a computer based catalogue and indexing system.

Information in other libraries in Lesotho through a computer based Union catalogue.

Information in other libraries in Africa and beyond through access to other computer based information systems such as SADIS and PADIS.

Superlibrarian takes Lebohang on a ride to the planet PADIS and introduces him to his friend Superdocumentalist who quickly demonstrates how easy it is to access the computer based at the planet SADIS to find out all the information there is available about Lesotho.



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Superdocumentalist continues to explain to Lebohang how it is her intention to provide computer access to information for the major libraries in Lesotho in the near future, and accordingly it might be worthwhile at this point to return from PADIS to Maseru in order to discuss the implications of such a development on your library.

Naturally as before the best way to proceed is probably to ask ourselves a series of questions:

Does your library presently enjoy access to and use of a computerised information system?

Does your library have any plans for developing or becoming involved in the development or participation with a computerised information system?

Has your library been involved in any way in discussions as to how Lesotho will participate in attempts to develop a regional information system (SADIS) and a Pan African Information System (PADIS).

Has your library been represented at any training events that have taken place within the region related to computerisation?

Is your library regularly updated on developments relating to the attempts to develop computerised information systems for Africa?

What difficulties do you foresee for your library in responding to the latest technological developments such as computerised access of information?

How do you think Lebohang's quest for information would be enhanced by access to a computerised information system?



Library Co-operation

Naturally Lebohang's search would be enhanced if there was co-operation and compatibility amongst the Information systems and Services in Lesotho. As he explained to Superlibrarian one of the major problems that he had encountered during his search was the great variation in practice from library to library. The biggest problem he found was the lack of information on the resource available in Lesotho and it's libraries. Superlibrarian pointed out that ideally there should be an Union Catalogue which lists all the books available in the major libraries; a legal deposit law which would be the instrument by which certain libraries in Lesotho could acquire the nation's literature, and a national bibliography which provides an up to date list of everything published about Lesotho.

Lebohang was excited about these ideas and asked Superlibrarian what libraries could do in order to ensure an improved approach to co-operative information provision. Superlibrarian replied that it wouldn't be a bad idea if they sat down together to discuss some of the following major issues which form the basis for library cooperation.

Let's leave Lebohang and Superlibrarian for the last time so that we can discuss some of these issues and consider how your library could participate in a National, library co-operative network.

For example, do any of the following take place in Lesotho?

Joint acquisitions, including co-operation purchasing agreements.

Centralised cataloguing

Union catalogue

National Bibliography

Information resource directories

Reciprocal borrowing

National interlibrary loan scheme

Co-operative reference service

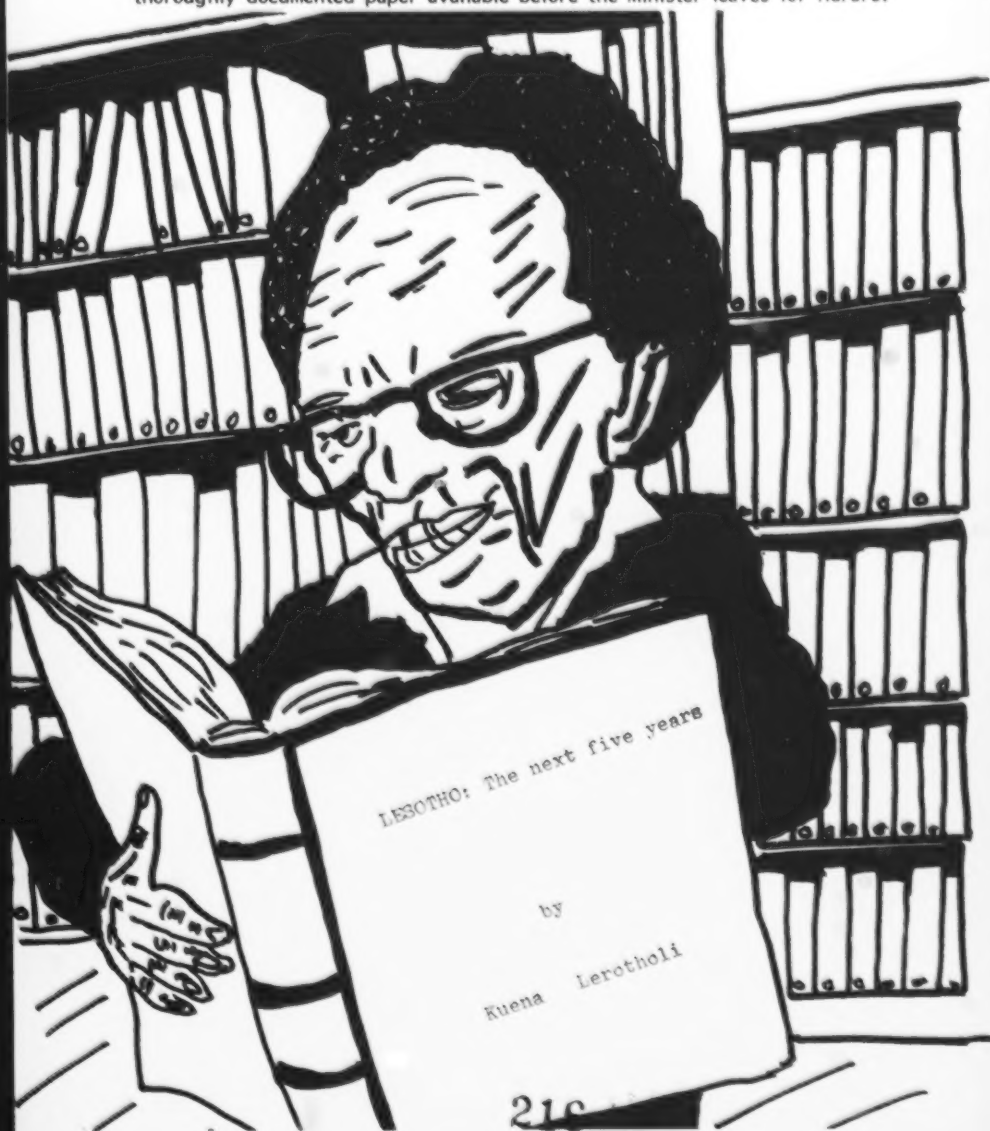
Legal deposit law

Common bibliographic records and index languages

Consensus on issues relating to the future use of computer hardware and software.

The End

The ultimate aim and natural conclusion of our works shows Lebohang deeply engrossed in his research and all being well Lebohang will soon have a thoroughly documented paper available before the Minister leaves for Harare.



Bibliographical Notes

1. The rationale governing the genesis, approach, framework and content of this paper is based entirely on a series of D.S.E. sponsored Workshops, Seminars and Courses that have taken place within Southern, Central and Eastern Africa during the period 1983-1985. These include:
 - (i) Hüttemann, L. (ed) Workshop on Mangement of Information Services, Bonn: ESAMI/DSE, Oct. 1983, 94 p.
 - (ii) Hüttemann, L. (ed) Management of National Documentation Centres, Bonn: DSE, August, 1984, 101 p.
 - (iii) Hüttemann, L. (ed) Establishment, Function and Mangement of National Library and Documentation Service, Bonn: DSE, June, 1985, 101 p.
 - (iv) Sturges, P. (et al) Introduction to Librarianship and Documentation: Pilot Edition, Gaborone/Bonn: University of Botswana/DSE, Dec. 1985, 208 p.
2. The cartoon character Superlibrarian is based on a similar individual known as Supertutor who has appeared in BLURB Published by students at Brighton Polytechnic Department of Librarianship. Naturally both Supertutor and Superlibrarian are both based on Superman who regularly appears in the journal MARVEL COMIC.
3. A valuable resource for information on libraries in Lesotho, in particular on the establishment of co-operative networks is Thabisi, F.M. Co-operation between libraries and other information systems in Lesotho. Gaborone: University of Botswana, 1983.

USER-RELATED PROBLEMS (USER-ANALYSIS, USER EDUCATION, etc.)

AT N.U.L. - LIBRARY: A CASE STUDY

by P. Moabi

At NUL library, like in many academic libraries, location of material on the shelves poses a problem to most library users. This is due mostly to the inadequate user education programmes that are offered to help users find their way in the library.

In this University Library, the user education programme that's being followed at the moment is not very effective. During the first two weeks of orientation, a day is chosen when students are taken on a guided tour of the library - they are shown where materials are located and where services and amenities can be found. This introduction to the library is done in only one hour and because of the large number of first year students, although they are led by library staff, the tour ends up in confusion as groups sometimes get mixed up and a student may not know to which group he originally belonged. As a result, students leave the library after the tour having gained nothing.

The University Library Board having realized that the previous methods of educating library users proved not to be useful asked the library to lay down more fully the form that library instruction should take. This the library did in 1982 but unfortunately up to now the strategy that was formulated has never been implemented as there seems to be no co-operation from the members of the teaching staff.

In this plan the library had suggested that at 1st year level, students should be given a general introduction to the library, that is, going round the different departments and being shown the types of material acquired by the library, for example textbooks, periodicals, reference works and the reference librarian for enquiries etc. Also at this stage they were to be taught how to use the library catalogue.

At 3th year level it had been suggested that students be taught research techniques as it was realized that at this stage students are expected to be

more independent as they are engaged in research projects which demand more detailed literature search methods. At this stage students are to be taught how to use bibliographies, indexes, abstracts, Inter-library loans and so on.

These instructions, both at 1st and 3rd year levels are to be complemented by assignments that will count towards students' final assessment. It was also intended that a great deal of input in instructional course outline be provided by the teaching staff who will also be expected to suggest the trend assignments will have to take. This was by way of motivating the teaching staff to develop an interest in using the library as an instructional method and thus in turn they would motivate students to develop an interest in using the library.

Up to now the library is eagerly looking forward to the day when this suggested instruction programme will be implemented. This is hoped to be achieved if it is accepted by the faculties whose attitudes may contribute more to the success or failure of these programmes.

Because of the absence of effective library instruction the following problems have been encountered by the users:

- a) Students and lecturers do not fully use library and other information sources to satisfy their academic needs.
- b) Sometimes lecturers make a suggestion that a particular book be placed on order while that book is already on the shelves.
- c) People doing research may ask that a particular book be sought from other libraries on inter-library loan when that book is in the library's stock.

In order for these problems to be overcome, there has to be a closer working relationship between librarians and teaching staff: there is a need for an even closer relationship between the library and academic programmes.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Preamble

Recognizing that the coordination of information services in a country is a prerequisite to the optimum use of information resources,

Noting also that there is an inadequate and haphazard provision of information services in Lesotho, and an acute shortage of trained manpower in those services,

Aware of the need to sensitize authorities on the role that information plays in economic, social, and cultural development of a nation,

This workshop therefore recommends that:

1. A National Information Coordination Committee be formed with the view to advising the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho on the formulation of information plans and policies; and further, to study all the technical reports made on the various information services and to recommend a plan of action.
2. The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho should formulate a national information policy which should iterate more clearly the sphere of action of all information services in Lesotho, and their expected level of competence.
3. Existing information institutions should be upgraded to a level that will enable them lively participation in information collection, organization and dissemination to all user groups. Particular attention should be paid to upgrading physical facilities and library posts in order to attract suitable qualified and experienced personnel.
4. Professionally qualified information personnel should be given the opportunity at all times to represent their profession at the national and international information forums.

5. Legislation should be enacted on
 - (a) Legal deposit
 - (b) Copyright law
 - (c) and other legislationsin order to give the national information services a basis for their bibliographic control.
6. Consolidated legislation covering museums, and the activities of the Protection and Preservation Commission (PPC) should be passed, in order to have a better and effective control of the movement of natural and cultural items from Lesotho.
7. In order to increase user awareness, appropriate bodies such as the University, colleges, schools and other educational institutions are urged to include in their programme systematic instruction in the use of information resources available in the country.
8. Courses in Art as a means of transmitting information should be introduced and be offered in all educational institutions.
9. In view of the assistance that PADIS can provide to Member Countries, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho is urged to identify an institution that could serve as a National Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC), and link up with the PADIS, and other regional and international systems.
10. The training of manpower in the fields of libraries, museums, archives and documentation centres, should be given high priority in order to alleviate the present shortage of qualified personnel in these fields.
11. Efforts should be made by all the elements of the national information systems, to cooperate and coordinate their services with a view to establishing a more formal resource-sharing programme.

ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

by L. Hüttemann

Participants, resource persons, observers and staff of the workshop were invited to fill an evaluation questionnaire during the last session of the official programme. There were 11 questions with pre-formulated answers, and one open question regarding general comments at the end of the questionnaire. 16 participants, 4 resource persons, and 7 observers and 2 staff members returned the filled questionnaire. The following analysis considers the answers of 2 groups, namely the participants and the observers and staff.

1. What did you expect to gain out of this workshop?

The questionnaire contained four pre-formulated answers; one or more choices were allowed.

Participants: 8 votes for "to prepare the coordination of a national information centre/service"

5 votes for "to work more efficiently in my home institution"

3 votes for "to acquire knowledge in specific subjects"

Observers: 5 votes for "to prepare the coordination ..."

3 votes for "to work more efficiently ..."

3 votes for "to acquire knowledge ..."

As observers were drawn from the same target group as participants it is no surprise that the priority of expectations were more or less the same among the two groups. The answers reflect the importance of the different topics of the workshop: there is a great desire to participate in the preparation of a national information service.

2. To what extent were your expectations fulfilled?

The questionnaire provided a scale with six categories of which 0 meant "nil" and 5 meant "completely" to classify the answers. There was no middle category, so that answers had to decide for a positive or negative side. Therefore, an average of 2,50 would mean exactly the middle of

the scale; a higher average would be on the positive side, a lower average on the negative side.

The average for the participants was 3,66, showing that the expectations were fulfilled between the two categories "above average" and "very high". The average for the observers was 2,89, which is only slightly on the positive side. There were no indications why the observers rated the fulfillment of their expectations considerably lower than the participants, as both groups were drawn from the same target group. An overall average for both groups was 3,33.

3. To what extent do you think the knowledge gained during the workshops is applicable to your working situation?

The same six-category scale as for question 2 was used in the questionnaire.

The average for the participants was 4,0, whereas for observers it was 3,75. The overall average was 3,91. To this question both groups responded almost equally: the knowledge is thought to be applicable "very high" at the workplaces of all of them.

4. To what extent were the workshop objective achieved?

The questionnaire provided again the six-categories scale for four objectives:

- a) to improve the planning and decision making capability in national development authorities;
- b) to improve the supply of information to various user groups;
- c) to recommend measures concerning the establishment of a national information centre/service;
- d) to improve regional cooperation among I&D professionals.

The averages compiled from all answers were as follows:

	4a)	4b)	4c)	4d)
participants:	3,42	3,53	3,40	3,87
observers:	3,40	3,43	3,38	3,67

There were almost no differences in the answers of the two groups or to the extent of achievement of the four workshops objectives. All averages show that the extent of achievement was well above average with a

tendency to reach the "very high" category, which shows that the content of the programme was designed well.

5. To what extent were you satisfied with the structure of the programme?
Once more the six-category scale was used. The average for the participants was 4.25, whereas for observers it reached only 3.00. The answers show that the participants were highly satisfied with the programme structure, but the observers had some reservations. The reasons for the latter remain undisclosed, even during an "open" evaluation after the filling of the questionnaire.
6. Were you satisfied with the contents of the programme?
The questionnaire provided only two answers: "yes" and "no". Out of the total of 25 participants and observers 23 stated "yes" and only two stated "no", one of these two mentioning that there should have been "more case studies". In a general sense, the organizer's preparation of the workshop was appreciated.
7. Do you think the presentation of the lectures was good, just right or below level?
In the analysis of this question no differences between the two groups are made. 19 answers stated that the presentation of the lectures were "good", 4 answers stated "just right" and only 2 answers stated "below level". The resource persons selected for this workshop can thus be satisfied with the work done, and the organizers with the selection of the resource persons.
The session which participants and observers liked most were "all sessions" and "Information Retrieval - A Case Study" with 3 votes each. Only the session on "PADIS" got more than 1 vote when disliked sessions had to be mentioned, but 11 persons said that they disliked none of the sessions.
8. How was the quality of handouts, discussions and field visits?
The questionnaire provided the categories "good", "just right" and "below level". No difference was made for the two groups. The total number of votes does not make up 25 as some did not tick the relevant boxes in the questionnaire.

- a) handouts: 17 votes "good", 3 votes "just right";
- b) discussions: 14 votes "good", 7 votes "just right", 1 vote "below level"
- c) field visits: 20 votes "good", 4 votes "just right".

The total answers prove that the organizers have done quite a good job. The lower votes for "discussions" can be explained that the workshop was prepared for 18 participants only, and that during the discussions the observers had few opportunities to raise their respective points.

9. Of all sessions, which one would you personally have liked to spend more time on?

Of all the session held during the workshop the two groups mentioned most often "Information Retrieval - A Case Study" with 5 votes and "The Fitting of National Information Services ..." and "Case Studies" with 3 votes each. To no surprise, these were the papers which concentrated on practical aspects rather than theoretical.

10. To what extent were you satisfied with several organizational details of the workshops?

The following points had to be answered by making use of the already known six-category scale:

- a) communication about the workshop;
- b) travel arrangement (not applicable for observers);
- c) accommodation (not applicable for observers);
- d) food;
- e) secretarial facilities;
- f) time schedule.

The average compiled from the answers were:

	10a)	10b)	10c)	10d)	10e)	10f)
participants:	3,54	3,82	3,50	3,00	4,27	3,73
observers:	2,78	-	-	3,33	4,89	4,89

Communication was obviously better made with participants than with observers. The secretarial facilities were available on priority to participants. The time table suited the participants (being in residence) and not the observers (having to commute every day). These facts explain

the differences in the averages of the two groups. Looking at the averages of the participants the answers were in the category "above average" with a tendency to "very high". The results show that the organization of the workshop was appreciated by the participants.

11. How do you think you can personally follow-up on this workshop?

The questionnaire provided 5 pre-formulated answers. Multiple choices were permitted. The answers of both groups were analysed together.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 14 votes | "through contact and cooperation with fellow participants and their institutions"; |
| 1 vote | "through information of fellow colleagues"; |
| 9 votes | "through implementation of knowledge acquired during the workshop at own workplace"; |
| 8 votes | "through reading handouts and final report"; |
| 14 votes | "through further studies in the subjects tackled during the workshop". |

It is surprising that only one person voted for the second answer that follow-up work be made through information of fellow colleagues. Do all the others prefer not to share the acquired knowledge with workmates? The reason behind this remains unclear.

12. Suggestions and Recommendations

Only very few of the participants and observers made use of this possibility to express an open view on any item of the programme. Perhaps time was becoming short at the end of the evaluation session, and everybody wished to finish with the work. There was no sense in analysing the few remarks which concentrated mainly on allocation of more time.

Annex 1

PROGRAMME

Monday - 3rd March, 1986

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 09.00 - 11.30 | Registration of Participants, Announcements |
| 11.30 - 12.30 | Official Opening by the Hon. Minister of Education |
| 12.30 - 14.00 | Lunch Break |
| 14.00 - 15.00 | Keynote Paper by M.M. Lebotsa |
| 15.00 - 15.30 | Tea Break |
| 15.30 - 16.30 | Discussion of Keynote Paper |
| 19.00 - 21.30 | Reception by DSE |

Tuesday - 4th March, 1986

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 09.00 - 10.30 | Paper by R.J. Kukubo and discussion |
| 10.30 - 11.00 | Tea Break |
| 11.00 - 12.30 | Paper by S.M. Mohai and discussion |
| 12.30 - 14.00 | Lunch Break |
| 14.00 - 15.30 | Paper by D. Abate |
| 15.30 - 16.00 | Tea Break |
| 16.00 - 17.00 | Discussion |

Wednesday - 5th March, 1986

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 09.00 - 17.00 | Field visits |
| | a) National Library |
| | b) Agricultural Research Library |
| | c) University Library and Archives |
| | d) ISAS Documentation Centre |

Thursday - 6th March, 1986

09.00 - 10.30	Paper by M.M. Moshoeshoe and discussion
10.30 - 11.00	Tea Break
11.00 - 12.30	Paper by J.R. Neill and discussion
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch Break
14.00 - 15.30	Paper by E.E. Kaungamno (presented by L. Hüttemann)
15.30 - 16.00	Tea Break
16.00 - 17.00	Discussion

Friday - 7th March, 1986

09.00 - 10.30	Summary of Proceedings
10.30 - 11.00	Tea Break
11.00 - 12.30	Recommendations
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch Break
14.00 - 15.00	Evaluation
15.00 - 17.00	Free Afternoon or Traditional Entertainment
18.30 - 20.30	Reception by LLA and Closing Speeches

LLA/NUL/DSE WORKSHOP ON
COORDINATION OF LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION SERVICES IN LESOTHO

MASERU, 3 - 7 March, 1986

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